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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled:

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Collaborative Design of Health Communications
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Abstract

Design of health or social messages for small, or "micro" community settings is often a challenge for designers because of low-budgets, cultural differences, use of inappropriate "mass" marketing methods, lack of inclusion in the process of concepting campaigns, and a limited view of what is design.

The purpose of this study was to explore human-centered design methods that might be affordable, easily replicated, flexible (accounting for cultural differences), appropriate (accounting for unique factors of micro-community settings), and inclusive (generating greater community awareness and ownership). In exploring this, it was hoped that a clear picture of what design is and how inclusion of design methods earlier in program or campaign conceptualization could benefit overall success and impact of health communication efforts in micro-community settings.

Specifically, this study explored the use of human-centered design methods in the design of a suicide prevention campaign for the University of Nebraska at Kearney. Three collaborative design workshops were conducted. These workshops involved university students in the creation of hundreds of individualized posters that were installed throughout campus in groups of eight or more posters. The impact of the workshops on student participants' awareness and willingness to engage peers in dialogue about mental health issues was analyzed through pre- and post-test questionnaires, and participant observation. The value of the workshops to campus healthcare and counseling staff was analyzed through interviews following each workshop session.

Acknowledgements

Personal Statement

Over the last ten years of my professional design practice, many influences have affected my direction in this study. Some have been broad influences on the general areas of interest and others have been specific to the methods and tools used.

INITIAL DIRECTIONS

The initial direction for this project was established when a photographer I worked with at World Vision (an international aid and development organization) showed me a photo of a poster that I had designed. The poster was shown on the wall of a rural African clinic. There was a problem. The poster had been designed to promote a North American initiative to raise funds for HIV/AIDS related work in Africa and Asia. The message, imagery, and even the means of reproduction were selected for a broad North American audience of wealthy donors and community or political leaders. The poster had no information about HIV/AIDS and depicted a grandmother and her orphaned grandchild in a somber, dramatic fashion. I wondered how this poster would be interpreted by those who used the clinic. At best, I felt that they would find it irrelevant and at worst, I thought they would find it offensive. The poster was never intended for that setting, and I began to consider how organizations such as World Vision put resources toward the design of health-related materials for cross-cultural small (micro) community settings.

INFLUENTIAL EXPERIENCES

At about the same time I was considering these issues and their impact on me as a designer, I was volunteering with the Link Program, a non-profit organization that connects Seattle area high school students with professional designers and artists in a series of workshops. Workshops lasted up to three hours and were designed to explore various mediums such as drawing, painting, sculpture, and photography. The workshops were fast-paced, collaborative, and casual. This casual environment made it easy to interact with students in meaningful ways. Each workshop resulted in a large amount of creative work, dialogue, and the growth of relationships in a relatively brief time period.

Also influencing the direction and underlying theories of this project was a series of graduate courses I took in counseling at Mars Hill Graduate School in Seattle. The courses were taught from a perspective that emphasized the value of relationships and interaction rather than focusing on more cognitive, prescriptive methods of effecting change in oneself or others. The courses asserted that human change in behavior is more likely to result from desire and passion than from systematic, logical decision-making—therefore change typically comes from within a person or culture.

I did not immediately make a connection between these experiences and the issues I have chosen to explore in this project, but I recognize that they have had an impact on this research project and my design practice.

As a practicing designer I have often consulted on projects dealing with critical social issues in small, micro-community settings with low- or no-budget. I have encountered some communication efforts that were ineffective, wasteful, and even harmful, while others were helpful, effective, and appropriate. One project that had a direct influence on some of the methods and materials in this project involved a group of youth who were actively trying to raise money to support community work in an area of Africa that had been greatly affected by HIV/AIDS. The youth, who were part of an Edmonton church, and had asked me to help them raise awareness of their efforts to the rest of the church members. I proposed an approach in which youth participated in designing posters created with stencils that related to topics of social power and powerlessness. The posters were placed throughout the church building and provided context for discussion about the topics and how these same themes play out in North American culture. This project seemed to be a positive experience for the students resulting in highly visible posters that helped to initiate a lot of discussion between the youth and other church members. This interaction encouraged me to explore similar methods, materials, and environments in this study.

The materials chosen for this project were used successfully to create posters, however there were limitations and problems with their use that I later questioned. In particular, the use of spray paint was problematic because of the need for a calm, well-lit, outdoor/ventilated setting. In addition, spray paint has a limited color palette, and there were several instances where students felt they had "ruined" a poster because they had chosen a color that did not complement the other colors of their poster.

Through these experiences I have developed a growing interest in creating design tools that facilitate collaboration and creativity in micro-community settings. This has led, through this thesis project, to an exploration of how these approaches might facilitate interaction and dialogue through the process of design and in the experience of designing artifacts.

Specifically, the objectives of the resulting thesis project were to: 1) gain a greater understanding of research processes that pertain to the practice of visual communication design; 2) to explore existing theories, approaches, methods, and research from divergent disciplines that might be relevant in the design of health communications for micro-community settings; 3) identify an area within this research in which design methods, theories, or applications might contribute to the field of health communications; and 4) conduct an exploratory study that might provide some insight into how designers can benefit from collaborative methods when working within micro-community settings.

Collaborative Design of Health Communications in Micro-Community Settings

Introduction

CHANGES IN THE PRACTICE OF DESIGN

> Design is most often understood by the public as an artistic practice that produces dazzling lamps, furniture, and automobiles. This is how it is generally presented by the media and the museums. One reason why there is not more support for social design services is the lack of research to demonstrate what a designer can contribute to human welfare.
> *Victor Margolin and Sylvia Margolin (2002, p. 28)*

Since *Design for the Real World* by Victor Papanek in 1972, the social awareness of the design professions has been actively discussed. However, Margolin and Margolin's quote (above) from 2002 shows how little has changed in the general perception of design. Visual communication design still suffers from the perception of design as only an artistic field.

The field of design is culpable in this perception, as design education, publications, and organizations have often facilitated the unequal distribution of design expertise by a primary focus on aesthetically driven, extravagantly produced design artifacts. Except for the occasional design-related disaster, such as the Florida ballot design in the 2000 U.S. Presidential election, little visibility is given to what Margolin and Margolin call "social design services."

However, within the design profession there are several communities that are interested in practicing design in non-traditional settings, with a sense of democracy and inclusion. In his article, "Alternative Design Scholarship: Working Toward Appropriate Design," Dean Nieusma (2004) identified universal design, participatory design, ecological design, feminist design, and socially responsible design as alternative design communities whose members share an interest in inclusive design practice. Margolin and Margolin (2002) challenged designers to integrate social models of design into commercial practice, stating their belief, "...that many professionals share the goals of designers who want to do socially responsible work, and therefore propose that both designers and helping professionals find ways to work together" and that, "...designers will find many more allies in professions related to health, education, social work, aging, and crime prevention..." (p. 27).

There seems to be a change in thinking within the design disciplines, if not in the public perception of design. Elizabeth B.-N. Sanders (2002), described this change as a blurring of roles between designer and design researcher. She has stated that designer's roles increasingly will be to work with social scientists and users to explore design solutions together. She has also promoted designing tools that help users generate ideas and designs. The resulting creative, collaborative environment is one where the designer then interprets and synthesizes the "data" into ideas and directions.

Sanders (2002) referred to this shift in design thinking as "Postdesign." Sanders has noted that designers need to design tools that facilitate understanding of users' experiences as their deeper, more latent thoughts go unexpressed in words:

> Postdesign is an attitude about people. It is about the recognition that all people have something to offer and that they, when given the means to express themselves, can be both articulate and creative. Postdesign is contextual. Understanding and empathizing with the people who experience artifacts, interfaces, systems and spaces can best be accomplished by communicating with them in the places where they live, work and play while they live, work and play. Postdesign is participatory. It emphasizes the direct and active participation of all stakeholders in the design development process. This makes the deliverables of design more meaningful to the people who will ultimately benefit from them. *(Sanders, 2002, p. 7)*

This contextual, participatory approach recognizes that allowing all shareholders to "play the game" through co-design makes for an "infinitely expanding set of ideas"—ideas that are mobile and changing with peoples' experiences, relationships, and beliefs (Sanders, 2002). According to Sanders there is a need for greater knowledge and awareness in today's practice of design, as Postdesign "...blends design with the arts with the applied social sciences and blends them with new and emerging technologies" (p. 7).

This is a substantial shift from the historical study of design, which was guided by the fine arts and resided within art academies rather than universities. Buchanan (2001) reflected on this shift:

> The legacy of the art schools of design is with us today in the United Kingdom and in most other parts of the world, though the vision and effectiveness of these schools in teaching design grows fainter every year under the need for young designers to have more knowledge and a broader humanistic point of view in order to deal with the complex problems that they must face in their professional careers. *(p. 6)*

Appropriate design, social design, Postdesign, participatory design, and democratic design all share an inclusive approach and are in contrast to the public perception of design—and at times the perception from within the design profession. Nieusma (2004) attempted to categorize and define the modern requirements of design in a working theory of "appropriate design." He suggested that

there are five themes that are common in inclusive design approaches: diversity, disagreement, uncertainty, governing mentalities, and agency.

Diversity / universal design
Accounting for the differing needs of society

Disagreement / participatory design
Facilitating negotiation between those in power and the marginalized by creating space for vocalization and listening

Uncertainty / ecological design
Accounting for uncontrollable outcomes and the complexity of social, political, and relational interactions

Governing mentalities / feminist design
Identifying and responding to macro level beliefs such as consumerism and the position of women in a society

Agency / socially responsible design
Identifying and responding to political-economic forces such as market

(Nieusma, 2004, p. 14)

These themes are not unique to the design disciplines. They are reflected in many other areas as well, such as community development, organizational communication, and even theology. Designers are not unique in attempting to wrestle with the complexities of society. However, deep roots in consumerism, the market, and an emphasis on aesthetics can make it difficult for designers to respond to the divergent needs of society.

THE DESIGN OBJECTIVE
In this study, the exploration of design research methods that might help in underserved micro-community settings was undertaken. Inclusive or human-centered (e.g. participatory, appropriate, democratic, etc.) design practices were used and evaluated in the creation of health communications for a small university population. An extensive evaluation of these methods was beyond the scope of this study, but it was hoped that it might uncover new directions for deeper exploration, and raise new questions for further understanding the value of inclusive design methods.

THE RESEARCH PROCESS
The research process used (Fig. 1) was an exploratory process that was meant to lead to greater understanding and direction(s) for further research in the use of inclusive design methods for micro-community settings.

FIG. 1 | *The research process used in this study is exploratory and attempts to identify multiple directions for future research and applications. The methods diverge during initial contextual exploration and in consideration of future applications. Subsequent convergent research could bring greater validity to the future use of inclusive design methods in micro-community settings*

BACKGROUND

Do background research in design and related fields to identify ways in which designers might learn from or have a positive impact on health-related campaigns for micro-community settings

CONTEXT

Discover multiple opportunities for exploration of inclusive design methods in micro-community settings. Determine a specific setting and context to implement research methods.

Define the research questions, methods, and scope. Obtain community support, develop partnerships, and gain ethics approval necessary for conducting research.

Design, organize and assemble all necessary workshop components for testing and installation of finished posters

TESTING AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Facilitate workshops and expert interviews. Collect, document, and analyze qualitative and quantitative data. Look for connections between data that would begin to answer research questions.

CONCLUSION

Consider study limitations, summarize data and explore future directions for further testing or application of methods in other settings.

Background

Visual communication design is increasingly positioned to assist in previously underserved communication environments. Inclusive design methods have developed greater collaboration with social sciences, end-users, and marginalized populations. Some designers are turning to more empathetic, democratic, and relational methods, allowing them to move beyond the design of artifacts, into the realm of developing inclusive design tools and environments for those who previously lacked access to design resources and knowledge.

Practitioners in product design and interface design have led the way in integrating inclusive, collaborative design methods. Practitioners and researchers in other areas such as education, community development, health communication, and social marketing have actively considered issues of inclusion and democracy in their own research, but are not necessarily aware of the potential involvement of designers at earlier stages of planning and strategy. In health communication processes, collaboration with designers is often initiated after initial research and strategy is determined. It is rarely in the formative stages of a project. This maybe due to a lack of clarity and discussion about design.

In the USAID funded "P-Process", there is no mention of when, how, or why to involve graphic designers in the process of developing health communications (Fig. 2). The term, "design" is used strictly for strategy and program design stages and is not mentioned in the stages where communication materials are developed and tested (Martin, 2003). A similar confusion is seen in health communication processes published by Family Health International and the National Cancer Institute (McKee et al., 2004). With little reference to "design", these processes fail to clarify how designers can be valuable partners in the process of health communications. In micro-community settings, where marketing or communication experience may be limited, this lack of clarity can lead to confusion as to when or how to work with a designer.

The result of this is designers working from indirect, impersonal briefs and research, with reduced ability to implement inclusive design methods, or to tailor initial research to answer questions that directly pertain to design decisions.

EXAMPLES FROM HIV/AIDS PREVENTION RESEARCH

The awareness and need for non-traditional design methods and outcomes in products such as brochures, identities, and visual identities may be growing in health communication fields. HIV/AIDS prevention researchers have been critical of communication models that are based on non-inclusive methods (Ford et al., 2003; S. James et al., 2004; Majumdar et al., 2004; McKee et al., 2004; Myhre & Flora, 2000; Padian, 2004). Many of these researchers have called for broader, cultural, socio-economic, community-based, collaborative approaches (Ford et al., 2003; James et al., 2004; Majumdar et al., 2004; Martin, 2003; McKee et al., 2004). Future approaches should be less "prescriptive" and based on community decisions

3
DEVELOPMENT
PRETESTING
PRODUCTION

4
MANAGEMENT
IMPLEMENTATION
MONITORING

2
STRATEGIC
DESIGN

5
IMPACT
EVALUATION

1
ANALYSIS

FIG. 2 | *The P-Process was developed through the efforts of The Health Communication Partnership (HCP) HCP is a partnership between five leading public health institutions and funded through the U S Agency for International Development (USAID)*

The P-Process uses the term "de sign" when talking about strategy, and fails to clarify when or how to integrate professional design assistance, leading to confusion as to when or how best to integrate visual communication into the process of designing health communication projects (Martin, 2003)

made through collaborative dialogue (Ford, et al., 2003). Methods that emphasize supporting interpersonal communication appear to be needed. In an examination of 41 published articles about HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns, Mhyre and Flora (2000) concluded that, "personal discussion between sexual partners, parents and children, and among friends was considered to be an important step toward behavior or attitude or both types of change" (p. 39).

Social mobilization is an approach that has been explored in health communication efforts since 1978 (Renganathan, et al., 2005). According to Renganathan et al., social mobilization attempts to gain sustainable change in a community through mobilization of community members, political leaders, religious leaders, business leaders, community workers, service clubs, artists, and other parties that might have influence (ibid.). One outcome of social mobilization efforts has been an increase in community dialogue (Patel, 2005). In a chapter from the book, *Global Public Health Communication: Challenges, Perspectives, and Strategies*, Dhaval S. Patel (2005), described the work of The Right to Know Initiative (RTK) in HIV/AIDS outreach activities involving youth in Ghana. The participatory approach was focused on facilitating peer-to-peer discussion. In Ghana, RTK partnered with a soccer academy that integrated HIV/AIDS training with training in soccer. The students (age 12–17) were trained to be peer educators who share information about HIV/AIDS while participating in tournaments. Patel's evaluation of the RTK approach emphasized the use of innovative, age-appealing activities, suggesting that, "by using sports as an entertaining entry point to address the HIV/AIDS crisis, RTK mobilizes different young people and involves them from the start, thereby stimulating interest, empowerment, and ownership of the initiative in Ghana" (p. 97).

Such interpersonal, dialogue-driven initiatives need new tools and activities, requiring designers to be more exploratory and collaborative in their methods. In their review of the World Health Organization's work with social mobilization, Renganathan, et al. (2005), recommended the integration of social mobilization into social marketing methods. In addition, they recommend gaining greater understanding of community needs and opportunities through social mobilization before defaulting to "pre-requisite" marketing materials such as "posters, pamphlets, and T-shirts" (ibid.). The need for inclusion of social mobilization in health communications raises new design opportunities that might allow designers to be involved earlier on in the development of health communication programs, resulting in greater collaboration, understanding, empathy, and community ownership.

NEW APPROACHES FROM DESIGN
In a call for more collaborative, exploratory design methods, Jorge Frascara (2002) has advocated more interdisciplinary activity that values humanity:

> Design is a problem-oriented, interdisciplinary activity. There is a need to identify important problems and develop interdisciplinary strategies to deal with them. It is not sustainable to continue just reacting to clients' requests for design interventions. It is necessary to consider the discovery and definition of physical and cultural problems as an essential part of design. The nature of each problem might suggest the

spectrum of disciplines required to confront it. A set of tools to look at the world will have to be developed by inquisitive, critical, interdisciplinary observation, performed by people in love with humanity. *(p. 35–36)*

Frascara (2002) also stressed the need for "partnership" between those who produce information (designers, health workers, etc.) and those who interpret it (community members), suggesting that "if visual communication is concerned with affecting the knowledge, the attitudes, and the behavior of people, then it should do this in an ethical way, that is, seeking partnership in the process of change, rather than communicating things to people. The process of communication should be seen as a process of negotiation..." (p. 34).

According to Edward Woodhouse and Jason W. Patton (2004), this negotiation and discovery begins to blur the boundaries of design and designer. According to them, "the concept of design by society has three main facets, the first of which is that no simple boundary adequately delineates what counts as design, or who engages in it" (p. 2). This partnership, or "design by society" approach is considered somewhat controversial within the design community. To some it feels like putting design into the hands of those who have no expertise or knowledge; however, there is a distinction between knowledge/expertise and creativity. Sanders (2002) and Uday Dandavate based their design studio, Sonicrim, on the idea that people are creative, although they rarely take time to create. Additionally, Dandavate and Lafferty-Wellott (2003) and Sanders (2002) suggested that if given time and tools to create, users can be quite expressive of their ideas and dreams. Dandavate and Lafferty Wellott (2003) pointed out that when users are engaged in creation, they reveal types of information that traditional methods of market research never expose. By implementing methods with outcomes that are more generative and exploratory, a greater understanding of and empathy for users can be achieved. Sanders (2002) suggested that these types of approaches are "...built upon an aesthetic of experience rather than an aesthetics of form" (p. 5). Her "Make Tools" approach refocuses the designer on designing tools for the experience and expression of participants. These tools allow participants to create artifacts that then become the point of dialogue for greater understanding and empathy:

> The new tools are focused on what people make, i.e. what they create from the toolkits we provide for them to use in expressing their thoughts, feelings and dreams. When all three perspectives (what people do, what they say, and what they make) are explored simultaneously, one can more readily understand and establish empathy with the people who use products and information systems. *(Sanders, 2002, p. 4)*

Dandrate and Lafferty-Wellott (2003) have compared the designer's role in responding to these creative research environments to the performance artist's improvised response to an audience.

The creative research methods that Frascara, Sanders, Dandavate and Lafferty-Wellott have advocated show a deep concern for humanity. Their methods recognize the complexity of human interaction and the creative potential found throughout humanity.

This thesis study is an exploration in the use of similar methods to gain understanding, through creative interaction with community members and to assemble the participants' creative output into a community-based installation to raise awareness and dialogue.

ADDITIONAL APPROACHES

Several disciplines espouse a similar concern for humanity. Their approaches and methods account for the complexity of human interaction in various, but similar ways. Together, they have guided many of the directions taken in this study.

Social marketing

Social marketing uses marketing methods to achieve behavior change for social good. Social marketing research has shown that to make lasting behavior changes, a marketing plan must not be a one-time effort (Smith, 2005), should not be based on information alone (Gordon & Phiri, 2000), and should reinforce the need for community mobilization and ownership (Renganathan et al., 2005). These positions are as applicable to micro-community settings as large-scale settings. The development of sustained efforts that utilize sound marketing approaches and develop community support are a reflection of the importance of social issues regardless of the scope of the situation.

Participatory action research

Participatory action research is based on group collaboration and consensus. In participatory action research, the research is integrated directly into the environment and community to explore relationships and social structures that shape the social setting of that community. Some of the core qualities of participatory action research are: a continuous cycle of action and reflection (Smith, 1997); practical research methods that aim to, "reduce irrational, unproductive, unjust, or unsatisfying interactions" (Creswell, 2002, p. 610); elimination of constraints from media, education, and, political power (Smith, 1997); and valuing the resources and knowledge that exist within a culture already (ibid.).

Learning theories

Learning theories attempt to understand how people learn. Participatory and observational learning are two learning theories that emphasize the importance of human interaction in the learning process. Proponents of participatory learning suggested that people learn best in group settings (Duangsa, 1995) and benefit from action (Cavanagh, 2000) when in a learning environment. Observational learning advocates the repetition of simplified events and clear communication of positive incentives in the learning process (Bandura, 1986). In micro-community settings, the application of learning theories can have direct, positive impact on collaborative environments and indirect positive impact on cultural settings through prolonged participant interaction with other community members.

Diffusion of innovation

Diffusion of innovation (DOI) theories are a group of theories designed to understand how new ideas and beliefs spread through communities or culture as a whole. It has been cited as an important theory in public health programs (Haider et al., 2005). DOI theories can help health programs identify and take advantage of existing communication networks (ibid.). DOI is particularly interesting

in micro-community settings, as it suggests that a small group of motivated "change agents," or individuals with persuasive community connections, can have a profound impact on the diffusion of ideas or beliefs in a community (ibid). Florence Kitabere (2005) suggested that social networks between friends, family members, and sexual partners are key channels through which ideas or innovations are spread through communities.

Community development
Community development is the organization and development of partnership between community members in an effort to improve the community as a whole. Political, educational, religious, and social leaders are potential partners with community members in community development. Practitioners and researchers in community development have emphasized democratic approaches that empower the marginalized within a community to voice their opinion and perspective in the decision making process. Community development organizations have had success using folk media (Howard & Scott-Villiers, 2000; Palmer, 2002; Rodriguez, 2000; Wilkins, 2000), methods that emphasize interpersonal communication (Mody, 2000; Palmer, 2002) and processes that utilize and develop local resources rather than relying on external resources (Binswanger, 2000; Okiira, 2000). Additionally, collaborative environments have proven to be important for developing community-wide partnerships and creative research environments, and some community partnerships have been found to be critical to mobilizing long-term behavior change (Patel, 2005). Community development has emphasized and documented the success of using internal community resources. This success is encouraging in the exploration of low-tech, community-based collaborative methods for communication of health messages.

Qualitative research
Qualitative research is a broad field with diverse methods that are aimed at in depth understanding rather than the broad understanding sought in quantitative research. Michael Quinn Patton suggested that qualitative research, "seeks to capture what people's live, experiences and interactions mean to them in their own terms." (as cited in Sykes, 1990, p. 290). Qualitative methods include such approaches as focus groups, mini-focus groups, ethnographic observation and design workshops. These various approaches can be used throughout the design process to achieve deeper insight into participants or community members (Sanders, 2002), and gain detailed understanding of their life and circumstances (Plowman, 2003). Abbreviated, more manageable methods of qualitative research, can give clarity to specific questions in a way that quantitative research cannot (Plowman, 2003). In micro-community settings, qualitative research methods such as mini-focus groups or individual interviews can be done in conjunction with other community efforts to reveal a great deal of understanding without large scale quantitative methods that might be too cumbersome, and result in quantifiable data but little understanding of the "real life" setting.

THE POTENTIAL OF DESIGN
Designers are positioned to aid in previously underserved social communication environments by using inclusive design methods and collaboration with other disciplines. The need for innovative, participatory methods has been recognized by experts in health communications (James, et al., 2004; Majumdar, et al., 2004;

McKee et al., 2004). Through greater understanding of and partnership with other disciplines design has the potential to become an increasingly valued partner in affecting human welfare. Identifying settings that have the potential to test inclusive design methods is important in documenting and conveying design's value to research, funding, and social organizations.

Context

In this study, underserved micro-community settings were explored that had potential to benefit from inclusive design methods. The study focused on identifying a setting that was: a) small scale (micro); b) had funding limitations; c) presented tight-knit communication networks; and d) had existing efforts taking place to address a social issue. Because of a reliance on costly mass-production methods, complex technologies, and the need for highly trained experts from outside the community, micro-community settings often are forced to utilize communication materials that are poorly designed or borrowed from other campaigns or organizations that might not be culturally appropriate. This "borrowing" fails to take advantage of community interest, development, and participation. Collaborative, low-tech solutions that are more concerned with replication of methods than mass-production of materials may create greater community empathy, awareness, and ownership. There are many settings in which such methods could benefit—schools, universities, immigrant populations, marginalized social groups, or rural communities.

SUICIDE PREVENTION RESOURCE CENTER
The Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC) is a Massachusetts-based non-profit organization that is supported by a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The SPRC provides assistance, training, and resources to organizations and individuals that develop suicide prevention programs. Through a national grant, the SPRC has made it possible for universities to develop campus-based suicide prevention programs. These grants are typically applied for by university health workers with varying degrees of knowledge in social marketing, community research, and health communications. In some cases, much of the grant funding is used towards hiring of staff, administrating health screenings, or even facility upgrades. This distribution often leaves little funding for marketing efforts. Additionally, cultural diversity makes shared marketing materials impractical and eliminates the opportunity for community interaction and ownership.

The SPRC campus grant provided an opportunity to work within a micro-community setting with limited resources, but existing initiatives and community advocates.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT KEARNEY
One grant participant was the University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK). Because of their size and budget constraints, UNK fit the desired setting. Through several preliminary conversations, it was discovered that UNK health staff were in the process of developing a suicide prevention project, and had limited funding because much of the grant money was being directed toward the hiring of a project director and redesign of their facility.

According to the University website (2007), UNK is home to nearly 7,500 students. The student population is made up of over 85% undergraduate students, with nearly 75% of all freshmen living on campus. Student population is primarily

from the region, but is growing to include over 400 international students. UNK's Counseling and Healthcare Department provides professional mental and physical health care and prevention free to all enrolled students. Six UNK Counseling and Healthcare staff saw 220 students due to a "depressed mood" between 2004 and 2005 (Torres, 2006). Of those students, 53% admitted suicide ideation, while 12% had been hospitalized for attempting suicide (ibid.). Several assessments revealed a high percentage of UNK students had or were suffering from some sort of mental health issue. The assessments also showed that a high percentage of students did not choose to access the campus' counseling resources because of stigma associated with mental health issues (ibid.).

The UNK Counseling and Healthcare staff had established a preliminary plan to reduce mental health stigma, increase student awareness of mental health issues, increase student use of counseling services, and increase awareness of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. Due to the large number of students who arrive on campus with existing mental health issues, the plan was to target first and second year students.

One component of the UNK Counseling and Healthcare plan was an awareness campaign meant to involve students in the design of marketing materials to raise awareness of mental health issues and resources. The initial plan was to conduct a student poster design competition, with a prize given to the student who designed the selected poster. Due to limited success with previous poster competitions, and the inherent selection of only one "winner," UNK Counseling and Healthcare staff questioned the value of this approach. Specifically, they expressed frustration with limited participation of only a few students that had the technical knowledge to submit a poster concept and a system that "rejected" all but one entry. They were searching for alternative approaches that would raise awareness and involve students in the process.

After obtaining an initial understanding of the projects' objectives, an alternative plan was presented to UNK staff. This plan incorporated inclusive design methods that attempted to address their concerns about participation, diversity of participants, and selection of student work. This proposal included the facilitation of three to five collaborative poster design workshops and the placement of student-designed posters into a campus installation aimed at raising awareness and discussion. The proposal was met with enthusiasm by UNK Counseling and Healthcare staff. In particular, the inclusive nature of the proposal, and the opportunity to interact with students in a collaborative environment were of interest to them. Additionally, they felt that the proposed installation of "temporary construction walls" would be very noticeable and effective in engaging students with messages about suicide prevention and campus resources.

Over the course of several meetings with UNK Counseling and Healthcare staff, University administration and facilities management, it was determined that three collaborative workshops would be facilitated with selected posters installed on temporary walls in high traffic locations throughout campus.

These workshops were meant to be an initial test of how such a collaborative environment might affect participants, benefit counseling staff, and result in a visible marketing campaign that engaged UNK students. The hope was that

through participation in the workshops, participants would: a) learn about suicide prevention, recognition, and campus resources; b) become more familiar with UNK Counseling and Healthcare staff; c) be more apt to talk to their peers about mental health issues; d) engage in dialogue with peers about the project because of their participation; and e) feel a sense of pride and ownership in the posters that were produced and installed on campus. Additionally, it was hoped that UNK Counseling and Healthcare staff would find the workshops to be a valuable environment for: a) presenting suicide prevention information; b) interacting with students in an informal environment; and c) gaining greater understanding of the students and the UNK culture. Finally, it was hoped that the posters designed in the workshops would result in an installation that would be highly visible to students on campus and convey messages that informed and persuaded students to take actions that would prevent suicide or reduce related health issues.

SUICIDE PREVENTION CAMPAIGNS

Suicide is the third leading cause of death in youth between the age of 15 and 24 (CDC, 2003). Only homicide and accidental death outnumber suicide in that age bracket. University students are particularly at risk due to new stressors in their lives—pressure to succeed, lack of vocational direction, and being away from home for the first time (Westefield et al., 1990). In his dissertation, Daniel Holdwick (1999) reviewed seven short-term, school-based suicide awareness and prevention programs. His review revealed that all but two of the programs exhibited quantifiable and significant positive impacts on students' understanding or attitudes about suicide. The short-term programs ran from one to three hours and attempted to cover a variety of topics in that time. Holdwick cited the work of Kalafat (1990), who recommended that programs establish attainable goals such as increasing knowledge of: suicide; signs of suicide; community treatment resources; coping and intervention strategies; and symptoms of mental illness. In response to this and other research, Holdwick suggested that some university level programs may want to "minimize statistical information on suicide rates and prevalence and emphasize elements such as fear appraisal, problem-solving suicide-related situations, and general coping strategies" (p. 89).

In a more recent review of school-based suicide prevention programs, Deborah Brown Kimokeo (2006) discussed "comprehensive integrated multidisciplinary" (p.24) approaches to suicide prevention. These approaches, based on human ecological theory, hold a broad systematic perspective that recognizes the systems and environments surrounding a student. This systematic perspective reflects the potential of school-based programs to have lasting change:

> For example, if a suicide prevention program in a school setting employed a new methodology, such as mental health screening, there may be major impact on the school community. This new addition to the established blueprint of the school may affect the relationships among the school administration, the teachers, other school staff, and the community at large for a long while, either positively or negatively, depending on how the action is perceived. *(Brown Kimokeo, 2006, p. 25)*

In an analysis of suicide prevention telephone interventions, Lynne Becker (1997) recommended that the first focus of prevention programs should be to "...avert the incidence of suicidal intent before signs or symptoms appear..." (p. 11). This again reinforces the value of programs that take into account the broader, social setting and environments. Even when suicide ideation occurs, the immediate community plays an important role in recognizing the signs and clues at the earliest possible stage (Becker, 1997).

School and university settings provide an opportunity for suicide prevention programs to have a broad, long-term effect. Through community engagement through inclusive or collaborative methods, suicide prevention programs have the opportunity to help change perceptions of suicide and mental health, as well as being part of a larger effort to educate and motivate community members to help prevent suicide. Broad programs that incorporate multiple disciplines, such as design, have the potential to have lasting impacts through affecting individuals and environmental factors.

Research questions

In her article, "Theory, Analysis and Effective Research Communication for Design," Sharon Helmer Poggenpohl suggested that design research should be aimed at developing a theory, method, or tool (2003). This thesis study was undertaken to explore collaborative design workshop methods for micro-community settings. The research questions are focused on how collaborative design workshops might increase ownership and dialogue in micro-community settings. This study is not focused on measuring the impact of the visual outcome of the workshops; however, future research could be undertaken to evaluate the success of collaborative design workshops in creating persuasive social marketing campaigns.

PRIMARY RESEARCH QUESTION

How can collaborative design workshops for micro-community settings result in increased health-related dialogue and increased awareness among workshop participants and their peers?

SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Do collaborative design workshop participants feel a sense of reward and ownership toward the posters and knowledge that results from the workshop?

Can collaborative design workshops result in visible, appealing posters even if participants do not consider themselves artistically inclined?

Can collaborative design workshops result in reduced stigmatization of mental health issues among workshop participants?

How does the use of stenciling to create posters affect the visibility and interpretation of health-related posters among community members?

Can collaborative design workshops give health workers and organizations valuable insight and greater empathy toward community members?

Can the combination of low-tech printing techniques and greater reliance on community involvement result in methods that are feasible and effective?

Research methods

> Some see no need for design research, and some see in the problems of design the need for research that is modeled on the natural sciences or the behavioral and social sciences as we have known them in the past and perhaps as they are adjusting to the present. But others see in the problems of design the need for new kinds of research for which there may not be entirely useful models in the past—the possibility of a new kind of knowledge, design knowledge, for which we have no immediate precedents. We face an ongoing debate within our own community about the role of tradition and innovation in design thinking.
> *(Buchanan, 2001, p. 7)*

As Buchanan (2001) has suggested, design research is a topic of much debate—partly due to the relative youth of the design profession. In his article "Design Research and the New Learning," Buchanan found that a lack of definition, and categorization in design research is a positive aspect, allowing designers to reach into other disciplines and return with knowledge, understanding or methods that have an impact on the process of design itself (ibid.). The strength of design research, in Buchanan's perspective, is in its lack of boundaries. He proposed that many designers feel pressure to evaluate design research by the contribution it makes to other fields. However, he also warned against a narrow, dogmatic view of design research where, "the alternative, common among some design theorists and researchers, is to believe that design must ultimately be reduced to one or another of the other disciplines—i.e. cognitive science, engineering, fine art, anthropology, marketing, and so forth" (ibid., p. 17).

A variety of research methods were used in evaluating collaborative design workshop methods. Both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods were used. Through comparison of this data, results could be triangulated to confirm themes and provide validity to the evaluation.

In this study, data was collected using five different methods: observation, evaluation of outcomes, surveys, interviews, and group discussions. Because of the formative nature of this study, data was compared during and after each workshop, resulting in slight adjustments to the methods, materials, or follow-up questions. This flexibility allowed for greater understanding and exploration of the methods and materials.

The study was originally designed to have three phases. The first phase consisted of the facilitation of three collaborative workshops. The second phase was a student focus group to determine the visibility and impact of the intervention. The third phase was expert interviews of health staff involved in the study itself.

PHASE ONE: COLLABORATIVE DESIGN WORKSHOPS

Three collaborative design workshops were facilitated over the course of one week. The workshops utilized the same structure with only minor changes to stencils between each workshop. The collaborative workshops incorporated a pre-test questionnaire, post-test questionnaire, observation of participants,

reflection on outcomes, and a post-test discussion with participants. The pre- and post-test questionnaire were designed to measure quantitatively any impact the workshops had on participants' views of the use of posters as a means for communication on campus, and more importantly, any change in their likelihood of talking about mental health issues or resources on campus to a peer. Additional close-ended post-test questions were designed to understand the impact of the workshops on participants, and to gauge the perceived impact that the posters would have on campus. Participants were observed throughout the workshop to discover areas of frustration, enjoyment, or interaction with peers. The primary researcher, UNK Counseling and Healthcare staff, and research assistants were also able to interact with participants through participating in the workshop. All researchers, assistants, and counseling staff were encouraged to assist with materials, answer questions, develop rapport with participants, and participate in creating at least one poster. These interactions also allowed researchers to develop a greater understanding of participants' experience, and develop follow-up questions for the post-test discussion. The post-test discussion was a mini-focus group with open-ended questions that were aimed at gaining further insight into participants' experiences, processes, beliefs, perspectives, and response to the workshop methods and results. In particular, participants were asked how the workshop may have affected their willingness to talk to a peer about mental health issues or refer someone to mental health resources. The discussion groups were audio recorded and transcribed, allowing for triangulation between what was reported in the questionnaires, observed during the work time, and talked about during the group discussion.

PHASE TWO: FOCUS GROUP
The focus group was designed as an optional research phase that would attempt to gain an initial understanding of how the final poster installations were perceived by UNK students not involved in the workshops. It was determined that the facilitation of the focus groups was beyond the scope and time limitations of the study and therefore was not undertaken.

PHASE THREE: EXPERT INTERVIEWS
Expert interviews involved both a formal follow-up interview with the project director Rosalind Sheldon from UNK Counseling and Healthcare, and informal follow-up discussions with Sheldon and other staff involved in the workshops. The aim was to reflect on the effectiveness of the design methods in achieving greater student interaction, and awareness of suicide prevention issues and resources. The interview and discussions were also meant to gauge the reproducibility of similar methods, and identify potential directions for modifications or further exploration.

RECRUITMENT OF PARTICIPANTS
Participants were recruited through posters and table tents placed throughout campus, including academic, administrative, and residential facilities. Posters briefly described the workshop and focus group and mentioned an honorarium would be provided.

Design methods

> The design of the design method and the design of the research method
> are tasks of a higher order than the design of the communications.
> Methods create frames, paradigms within which design decisions take
> place. *(Jorge Frascara, 1997, p. 33)*

Frascara highlighted the importance of design methods in the successful practice
of design. Having the right methods for the right situation is critical to the
success of design. The design methods chosen for this study were formulated
from human-centered design approaches.

HUMAN-CENTERED DESIGN

Human-centered design methods are diverse. They include the collection of quali-
tative and quantitative data, broad surveys of culture, creative unorthodox small
group interactions, and deep investigations into the lives of individual partici-
pants. In his overview of these methods, Bruce Hannington (2003) has separated
human-centered design into three categories—traditional, adapted, and innova-
tive. Traditional methods include market research, focus groups, interviews,
and visual research of archives or related literature. Adapted methods refer to
methods that have been borrowed from other disciplines such as participant
observation, ethnography, and artifact analysis. Hannington described innova-
tive methods as those that instill some sense of creativity into the research
interaction—they create a space for users to modify or take part in the creation
of design artifacts that are part of their lives. According to Hannington's model,
the methods explored in this study would be considered "innovative" because of
their inclusion of collaborative design.

Theories, such as David Berlo's (1960) model of communication have guided the
development of "innovative" human-centered design methods. In this model,
culture plays a critical role in the transfer of messages. When the source of a
message comes from within the culture to which it is being transmitted, there is
greater clarity and success in the communication.

In their research of participatory design of HIV/AIDS prevention posters, Bennet
et al. (2006) referred to Berlo's model, seeking to discover how design methods
can "...empower the audience to actively bring about change through their own
effort and with their own ideas or concepts...." They noted that, "The audi-
ence rather than the graphic designer dictates which ideas reach fruition and
potentially in which form(s) they do so" (p. 180). In his reflections on teaching
design in Qatar, Peter Martin (2006) discussed the importance of considering
culture in the design process. His model for sustainable change in a culture
emphasizes the culture's continued interaction in the design process. Martin
suggested that this emphasis is essential because culture is such an intertwined
factor that is dependent upon relationships and the environment in which
individuals and society reside. Kin Wai Michael Siu (2003) examined the designer's
role in designing for culture in an article titled, 'Users' Creative Responses and
Designers' Roles." Within this article he reinforced the participation of the

audience, and questioned the role and task of design for culture. Siu suggested that the designer's role is to facilitate and coordinate the user's ability to make decisions and control the final design outcome. He suggested that design is not complete until it is used; therefore, the user is always the final "producer" of a design, and a designer's goal should not be a "finished" design:

> First, designers must recognize that they should not, and are not able to, make decisions for users... Second, in parallel with recognizing that they should not and cannot make arbitrary decisions for users, designers also should recognize that users have the right to actualize and modify designs to make them more suitable to their needs and desires. Based on these two recognitions, there are two alternatives which designers should seriously consider: (a) allowing more "gaps" for users to fill in, and (b) encourage user-participation in developing designs *(p. 70-71)*.

It is impossible to pull the design method away from the always-in-flux reality of humanity and culture. Human-centered approaches are intended to create a flexible, responsible, and democratic approach to aid in the design for real-life settings. It is the right of the audience to be a part of the process, whether the designer allows for it or not. When human-centered approaches are used, they recognize those rights and make room to accommodate and take advantage of audience input—empowering the audience and setting a foundation for sustainability that is rarely achieved when the audience is left out of the design methods.

METHODOLOGICAL CASE STUDIES
Human-centered research methods can be integrated into the design process at various stages. Used at the earlier stages of research, these methods tend to be more generative and exploratory, while when integrated at later stages, they tend to be more formal and evaluative (Hannington, 2003). Two examples of integrating human-centered research methods in the design process are provided by Matt Cooke and Audrey Bennett. Cooke's (2006) model was developed to assist in the design of cancer awareness materials for a UK-based charity. Bennett's (2006) participatory model was used in the design of HIV/AIDS prevention materials in Kenya.

In Cooke's model, "traditional" human-centered methods are integrated throughout the design process, giving Cooke and other designers a greater sense of the target audience's interest, perspective, and knowledge. Quantitative and qualitative methods were used to gain insight, guide decision-making, and evaluate prototype designs. Participants were actively involved in an advisory role. One interaction of particular interest was Cooke's phone questionnaire designed to gauge the target audience's understanding of the links between weight and cancer. The research team found the questionnaire to be the "most thorough way of conveying the message" (p. 139). In the course of dialogue with the audience, greater understanding was achieved by both the research team and the target audience. Cooke suggested that designers should consider how the design process might initiate dialogue:

> If dialogue is considered to be one of the most effective ways to commu-nicate messages, organizations should consider ways to achieve this

from the start of a project. As designers, we should also consider the significance of dialogue and be conscious of its importance in conveying meaning. At a basic level, this means enabling the end-user to literally interact with our designs, and also facilitating a broader process of dialogue through websites, email, or telephone conversations. *(p. 140)*

A rich interaction with the target audience can be critical in the design of messages; however, in micro-community settings, this interaction can have a reciprocal effect on overall community understanding and awareness. In a small community setting, reaching a meaningful percentage of the population can happen relatively easily—resulting in design methods that have an educational potential within the community setting.

In Bennett et al. (2006), "innovative" human-centered research methods are used throughout. However, her model was designed for remote collaboration between Kenyan participants and western designers and researchers. Participants were asked to be more than just advisors. They were asked to sketch concepts, write, and closely collaborate with the research team to design the final prevention materials. The process was designed to be more of a mutual interaction between designers and participants. In Cooke's model, participants were primarily sounding boards for the researchers and designers. In Bennett's model, participants were equal members of the design team, allowing them to learn about design and communication while gaining self-confidence and conceptual skills in the process.

The addition of this "innovative" creative interaction with participants generated discussion, ownership, and growth. Hannington (2003) suggested that inclusion of these types of interactions results in more favorable responses to the research from participants. This is seen in Bennett's work, as some participants became engaged in the design process and chose to turn their experience into continuing, compensated work outside of the study.

Both of these approaches were designed to ensure community input and participation; Cooke through "traditional" human-centered design methods, and Bennett through "innovative" ones.

HUMAN-CENTERED METHODS FOR MICRO-COMMUNITY SETTINGS
One challenge to the success of these methods is micro-community settings that often have limited funding. Unfortunately this setting is more the norm than the exception. Cooke's methodology was implemented through his employment at a UK-based cancer awareness charity, while Bennett's work was funded through a $50,000 institutional research grant.

In micro-community settings, the methods used by Cooke would be reliant on fairly large research budgets and on research expertise to which few micro-communities would have access. The methods used by Bennett are also fairly dependent on budgets and time commitments that might not be realistic for some settings.

This study explores the use of what Hannington (2003) called "design workshops" as an alternative to traditional methods such as those used by Cooke and the more complex innovative methods used by Bennett. The goal is not to replace

these methods, but to explore one that might have a very particular application. Larger-scale methods undoubtedly produce greater diversity in research, more measurable results, and broader understanding of the culture; however, the cost for this may be impractical for already stretched community efforts. "Design workshops" or collaborative design workshops, may be of benefit to micro-community settings because of their ability to develop thematic understanding of participants in a creative environment that doesn't have long time commitments. Hannington (ibid.) gave a brief description of design workshops:

> ...participants (users) are invited to engage in the generation or manipulation of visual artifacts to communicate their thoughts or ideas. Completed as a group or individual activities, emerging artifacts might include collages, detailing preferences and feelings, cognitive maps or other diagrams indicating sequences of activities, actions, or thoughts, or models configured to represent desired product features and forms. (p. 15)

As Hannington suggested, design workshops often result in visual artifacts that express ideas, feelings, or preferences; however, these artifacts are often crude assemblages that, according to Sanders (2002), must often be synthesized and interpreted by designers to create the final artifact. This act of interpreting and synthesizing may be common because design workshops are often used for product or interactive design; both of which require large collaborative teams of experienced developers to produce the finished artifact. In two-dimensional persuasive design, production techniques can be far less complicated, opening the possibility that collaborative design workshops could be used to actually create persuasive posters for micro-communities. The technology gap between designer and user/participant can be greatly reduced through use of low-tech printing methods.

The collaborative design workshop methods used in this study rely on low-tech printing methods, combining them with design constraints and tools that attempt to reduce the "design theory gap" between experienced designers and laypeople. This approach may be particularly appropriate for micro-community settings because of the short time frame, low-tech reproduction, creative environment, community participation, and the potential for increased community dialogue, participant sense of ownership, and visual artifacts that can be installed directly into community settings. This approach, when done in conjunction with existing efforts (eg. community organizations, classes, events, etc.), might be a part of a sustained effort to bring social change to a micro-community.

For the designer in these settings, the objective might be more about the design process and the design of collaborative tools than about the design artifact. The designer's role would be to assist the participants in sharing their voice in a cohesive, compelling way—creating a culturally specific message and informed community members that might become long-term advocates.

WORKSHOP METHODS AND STRUCTURE

The workshops were structured to allow for a great deal of interaction and dialogue with participants. This structure allowed for learning about participants beliefs and thoughts about the issue of suicide prevention, but also allowed for feedback on the methods themselves. There were four parts to the workshops.

Introduction

An initial greeting was given by the primary researcher, while introduction and identification of UNK counseling staff was done by one of the counseling staff members. This introduction also included discussion of the topics discussed in the workshop, and presentation of printed resources and information relating to campus resources and mental health issues. Additionally, a pre-test question-naire was given at this time to create a baseline for evaluation of workshop effects on participants. Once participants had voluntarily completed the consent form and questionnaire, they were asked to gather around a central location for a demonstration of methods.

Demonstration

The second part of the workshop was a demonstration of methods and orienta-tion to resources. The demonstration consisted of the creation of two posters and discussion of simple design principles that might assist participants with their designs. The first poster was simple in that it focused on combining a limited number of stencils and colors—usually less than five. The goal was to introduce the basics of the process of stenciling. Participants were encouraged to work quickly, not feel pressured, explore different application techniques (eg. using a roller with little paint to create a more transparent, textured appearance), start over if they didn't like the direction, and to observe what others were doing. The goal was to emphasize a fast-paced, low-pressure, exploratory tone to the workshop. The second poster was one that implemented more stencils—usually about 10–15. The goal of this poster was to introduce techniques such as layering, creating repetitive patterns, using large overlaying patterns, and developing of contrast through choice of paint. Both posters were demonstrated with a "talk-aloud" approach that discussed issues but also gave participants a chance to hear the primary researcher reflect on what he thought worked and did not work in the posters. This was done not to recommend a specific approach, but to give participants a sense that the process was exploratory and that there were many ways to change dramatically the appearance of the poster, if desired. Participants were reminded to look at what they liked in other peoples work, and to explore new ways of creating images. The demonstration took between 10–15 minutes and allowed for informal interaction between researchers and participants.

Work time

Students were then given between 75 and 90 minutes to work on posters. Facilitators, including the primary researcher, research assistants, and UNK Counseling and Healthcare staff, worked alongside participants, reinforced participants' work through positive feedback, assisted in distribution of mate-rials, hung finished posters, and were available to participants if they became upset by the topics presented in the workshop. Additionally, the primary researcher was assisted in the creation of additional stencils as participants requested them during the workshop. During the work time, facilitators

encouraged participants to take a break, look at what was happening in other's work, and to take a look at posters that had been finished. Additionally, participants were encouraged to take alternative approaches to their work—if they were using fewer stencils, try doing one with twice as many, try using larger or smaller stencils, try painting over a large section of a finished poster and creating something on top of that section. Participants were informed when the work time was drawing to a close, giving them a chance to finish a final poster and clean up.

Review and discussion
A review and discussion time followed the work time, and began with an introduction to the post-test questionnaire. During this introduction, participants were encouraged to be honest in their assessment of the methods and were informed that the workshop was experimental and their feedback was important in making decisions about the design and use of similar methods in the future. Once participants had handed in the post-test questionnaire, a brief discussion about the workshop followed. This discussion time consisted of nine pre-determined, open-ended questions with follow-up questions. The questions were designed to gain further insight into participants' experience and analysis of the workshop.

Design of materials and tools

The design decisions made in creating the workshop tools and installation struc-
tures were influenced by Gillian Rose's theories of visual interpretation and basic
philosophies of visual organization (2001). There were two stages to the design of
the posters. The first was done prior to the collaborative design workshops, and
consisted of determining textual messages for a series of six posters, designing
of graphical treatments for those messages, and printing of these messages on to
the posters. The result of this stage was six primarily blank posters (Fig. 3). Each
carried unique messages identified by UNK health and counseling staff as impor-
tant suicide prevention messages, and design elements that would connect the
posters when seen as a group and distinguish suicide messages from participant
stenciled images on the rest of the poster. The second stage of design was done
by workshop participants, using supplied stencils and latex paint. This stage
resulted in a diverse collection of student-designed posters that were designed
to attract attention and stimulate community dialogue.

THE DESIGN OF "BLANK" POSTERS
The chief objective, in the design of the posters (Fig. 3) was to present a series
of diverse messages, give participants room to create, and develop a consistent
visual connection between posters. To achieve this, basic principles of visual
organization were used.
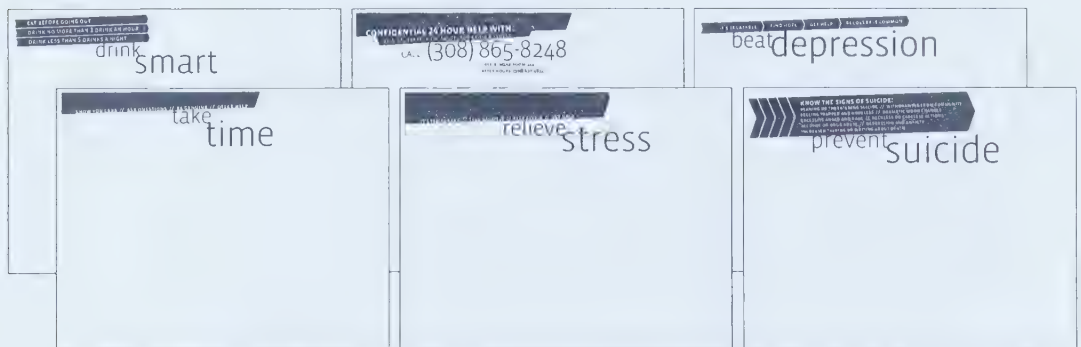
Simplicity
In his book "Introduction to Two-Dimensional Design: Understanding Form
and Function," John Bowers (1999) suggested that simplicity refers to either the
use of limited, simple elements or a form whose message is easily understood.
The poster design included a limited number of elements in the design, and
clearly presented the message through straightforward text. This simplicity
was designed to contrast the complexity of the collage effect achieved after the
posters were stenciled by workshop participants.

Contrast
The posters used contrast of type size to create separation within each poster
design. By giving prominent size to a short phrase, a viewer could quickly survey

multiple posters and distinguish the different meanings, giving further information to workshop participants and campus viewers. Additionally, posters used contrast in their use of color. Black screen printing ink was used to print the messages. This was the only area where black would be seen on any posters, as all paint used in the workshops was lighter in value and green in hue. Last, the posters were designed to contrast other communication materials on campus through the size of the posters. The posters were printed on 25 x 9" sheets of paper. This size was chosen because the paper was a readily available mill paper size and could be purchased easily through a local printer or online through resources such as French Paper or other paper manufacturers. This size not only contrasted with other communication materials on campus, but also allowed for participants to work with large-scale stencils to develop greater contrast, visual emphasis, or movement in their compositions. Smaller more readily available sizes of paper (eg. 11 x 17" or 12 x 18") seemed to be too constrained to include both enough space to work, and enough space for the preprinted messages to be clearly readable.

Rhythm
Posters were installed in groups of eight or more. Consistent positioning of the six pre-printed messages helped create a repetitive pattern when viewed as a group. This was designed to connect the posters visually, allowing them to be seen as a whole or as a group. The repetition also was designed to allow viewers to quickly discover the variety of messages by being able to anticipate where the next message might be located in connection with the previous.

Structure
As mentioned, the pre-printed messages on posters were printed consistently, creating a predictable structure on each poster. In addition, structure was given to the posters by the repetition of a geometric arrow shape that was tilted 2°. This arrow was enlarged and cropped on some posters, while it was reduced and repeated in others. The arrow shape was used as a device to contrast the secondary messages from the primary messages on each poster, and was chosen to show a sense of immediacy and motion. The arrow is a directional symbol that reflected the desire for viewers to take actions to reduce suicide risk on campus.

Harmony
Consistent use of typeface, paper, and color was intended to bring harmony to the pre-printed poster series and to the final stenciled posters. The typeface Vista Sans by Xavier Dupré was chosen for its simple form, large x-height, and informal yet dependable tone. It was used for all pre-printed text and in many of the stencils that incorporated text. Vista Sans' simplicity was suited for both screen printing and stenciling. The paper chosen for the posters was manufactured by French paper companies. Two tones from French's "Construction" paper line (cement green and factory green) were selected because their monochromatic color scheme created a cohesive color palette with the paints used by participants for stenciling. This was designed to give the overall impression of the posters a sense of harmony and deliberate coordination.

Textual messaging

The textual messages presented on the posters were the result of collaborations with UNK Counseling and Healthcare staff. The staff had diverse experiences in health communications. Their experience included interaction with students on the topic of suicide, training on health communication programs, and a staff member who was finishing a post-graduate degree in advertising. The posters focused on awareness, providing information, and reinforcing positive action. UNK staff has preferred to reinforce positive actions, present educational information, and introduce social norms in previous communications. Each of these approaches has proven to be effective means of changing behavior in past health communication campaigns (Backer et al., 1992; Perkins and Craig, 2002). Research on youth preference in health campaigns by Worden et al., revealed that the use of variety and multiple messages was preferred (as cited in Worden & Flynn, 2002). So, six textual messages were implemented into the pre-printed poster designs. The choice to use multiple textual messages was also done to gain an understanding of which messages resonated with participants and to give participants greater understanding of issues surrounding suicide—potentially increasing their chances of discussing topics with peers. The understanding of which textual messages resonated with participants was of particular interest to UNK staff, as they are always trying to develop a greater understanding of the UNK student population. This understanding was sought through dialogue with participants and observation of which posters were chosen more often than others. The diverse textual messages were also designed to give the final installations more depth and variety to viewers. It was hypothesized that if the posters all had the same textual messages, viewers would quickly discern this and fail to engage in a longer observation of the installed posters. The following final textual messages were developed over several rounds of collaboration between UNK staff and the principle researcher:

> *Beat Depression:*
> It's treatable. Find hope. Get help. Recovery is common.
>
> *Relieve Stress:*
> It's temporary. Talk about it. Stay active. Get help.
>
> *Prevent Suicide, know the signs of suicide:*
> Planning or threatening suicide, withdrawing from community, feeling trapped and hopeless, dramatic mood changes, excessive anger and rage, reckless or careless actions, alcohol or drug abuse, depression and anxiety, and increased talking or writing about death.
>
> *Drink Smart:*
> Eat before going out. Drink no more than a drink an hour. Drink less than 5 drinks a night.
>
> *Take Time:*
> Show you care. Ask questions. Be genuine. Offer help.

Confidential 24 hour help with:
Suicide, depression, abuse, addiction, and stress.
(Phone and address to 24-hour support line and location
of counseling offices).

Production of posters
Posters were screen printed prior to workshops using a black ink and 25 x 19"
sheets of paper. Screen printing was chosen as the reproduction method for the
pre-printed posters because it allowed for the larger size of paper to be used
without the cost of commercial printing. With low quantities (approximately 100
of each poster design), commercial printing would have been relatively costly,
while laser printing would have limited the paper size to no more than 12 x 18".

THE DESIGN OF WORKSHOP TOOLS
The pre-printed posters incorporated simplicity and repetition to give them a
strong cohesive feel. In contrast, the workshop tools were designed to allow
for variety and individual expression. Choosing from six colors of latex paint
and nearly 200 stencils, participants were encouraged to explore a wide variety
of approaches and messages in their poster designs. No rules were conveyed,
and experimentation was encouraged during the workshop introduction. The
decision to allow for this type of exploration and abstraction was made based
primarily on Gillian Rose's (2001) theories of visual interpretation. Rose (2001)
suggested that people see images in relation to themselves, and that they are in
a consistent process of interpretation and perceiving how important or related
an image or object is to them. Rose outlined three ways in which a message can
be interpreted: how an image is produced (mass produced, crudely produced,
etc.); the placement of the image itself (on a wall, in a publication, on the side of
the road, etc.); and the content of the image itself (family photo, instructional
illustration, etc.).

According to this theory of interpretation, how people come into contact with a
designed artifact can be important in the overall interpretation of that artifact.
An artifact that is out of context and produced using a unique method can have
more impact than highly refined design artifacts that fail to distinguish them-
selves from their surroundings. Frascara (2004) cited the use of informal hand-
writing and torn paper as two of the main factors for success of "out-of-order"
signs commonly seen on vending machines. In many community settings, distinct
production methods, such as stenciling, can stand out from other commu-
nications that are produced using commercial or desktop printers. In micro-
community settings, the closeness of community members can bring meaning
and importance to the artifact's message when viewers connect the artifact with
peers. This sense of proximity is difficult to achieve in larger settings or settings
in which the community is engaged in less collaborative and creative ways. It has
the potential to open up communication channels based more on friendships
and relationships. In a chapter on the use of social networks, Florence Naluyinda
Kitabere (2005) advocated the consideration of social networks in design of
health messaging campaigns. She suggested that these communication channels
are key to the dissemination of information within a community. Bella Mody
(2000) supported the importance of natural social networks in cultural or health-
related communication efforts. She cited two studies from the 1940s that showed

the power of relationships and the "impotence" of media to change attitude. One study was Paul Lazarfield's research during the Franklin Roosevelt re-election campaign. This study suggested that the most important influence on how people voted was interpersonal, not the media. A second study cited by Mody is the work of Ryan and Gross with rural Iowa farmers. This study indicated that farmers were not persuaded or informed about hybrid corn innovations through the media. Mody argued that media-only campaigns have limited impacts if not combined with other efforts that engage natural social networks.

The posters used in workshops in an attempt to take advantage of unique production methods and natural social networks in their design. They were designed to facilitate low-tech stenciling techniques, which would be a stark contrast in production methods to other communication materials on the UNK campus. In addition, the use of stencils allowed for participants to actually create finished posters within the time constraints of the workshops. This "ownership" of posters was seen as an opportunity to increase community dialogue, as it was speculated that participants would "show-and-tell" their posters to friends and peers if they were installed on campus. According to Rose (2001), Kitabere (2005), and Mody (2000), this interpersonal interaction could play an important role in how community members interpret the posters.

The attention to "ownership" can be seen in mainstream design for multinational brands and online environments. Many brands have shifted to a more flexible identity system that can be reinterpreted for diverse cultures, while retaining some consistency across all expressions of the brand. Online technologies that allow for user control of design and content have also looked to create environments that give users more ownership of their experience. In a recent interview, web designer Khoi Vinh (Heller, 2008) reinforced the need for greater user interaction and less brand control:

> We're entering a new era of design where the brands and experiences we create are no longer closely held, highly controlled cathedrals, but rather bazaars of commerce and conversation... Historically design has been a discipline that deals in control, in creating carefully managed, organized experiences that are then distributed to people to be consumed in whole. Digital media has upended that equation, and now—yes—the audience is an active participant in the process of design. *(p. 40)*

Design of the stencils
Ease of use, speed of reproduction, and flexibility of printing methods were the primary objectives considered when choosing a printing method for the workshops. It was believed that these three variables would have a large influence on participants' ability to learn, explore, and feel successful in designing posters. Stenciling was selected as the method used in the workshops because of its simplicity, expediency, and versatility in creating a variety of marks.

Stencils (Fig. 4) used in the workshop were cut from posterboard or thicker chipboard. The posterboard reacted best to the process of stenciling, as it did not curl and the coating of the paper resisted absorbing the paints and creating stencils that were too "soggy" to work with. Thicker chipboard worked well for printing, but it was difficult to cut. Thinner chipboard lacked the coating and became
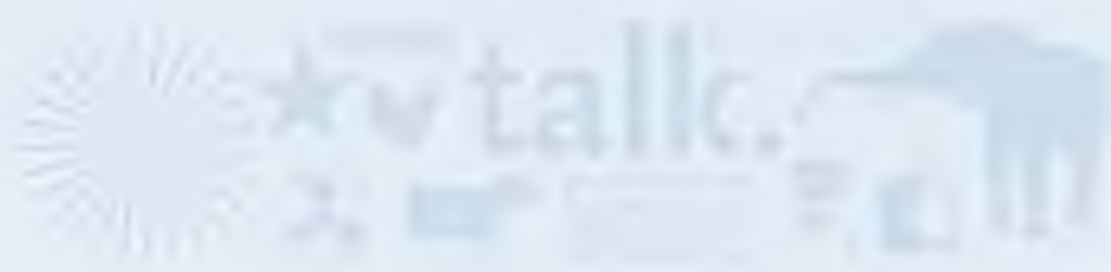
"soggy" after repeated use. The use of acetate for stencils was also explored. Acetate was easy to cut; however, it curled after use and became very difficult to manage.

Nearly 200 stencils were made for the workshops. The stencils varied greatly in size from small simple shapes to large patterns and animals that measured over two-feet across. Some stencils were directly related to the topic—such as the phone number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. Other stencils were simple geometric or organic shapes that had little to do with the topics. A third group of stencils was more pictorial but still abstract from the printed messages. These stencils included giraffes, light switches, and insects. The imagery was selected primarily on the visual appeal or contrast of the image as determined by the primary researcher. Consideration of image content and its relationship to the suicide prevention methods was minimal in selecting these images. Single letter stencils were also available for custom messages.

Production of stencils
The stencils were produced using a combination of digital and hand-drawn techniques. Some stencils were hand-rendered at the request of workshop participants; however, the majority were rendered through digital methods. Some stencils were drawn from a variety of photographic resources using Adobe Illustrator® to trace: some profiles were purchased from istockphoto.com; some stencil outlines were created based on simple geometric shapes in Illustrator; and some stencil outlines were created through modification of text using the font family Vista Sans and Illustrator. These digital outlines were then printed, taped lightly onto posterboard or chipboard, and then cut out using a hobby or utility knife. The printout of the illustration was then discarded. In some cases, the positive and negative cutout shapes were used for stencils; however, the majority of the stencils were negative shapes so that the paint would create a positive image when stenciled.

Stenciling methods
Stenciling can be done through a variety of methods. The most common is using rolled or sprayed on paint over a reverse stencil. The workshop incorporated exterior latex paint and dense foam rollers to apply the color. Latex exterior paint was used because of its low-toxicity, easy cleanup, low-cost, easy access, and broad color palette. The paint was also easy to control and gave a variety of textures when rolled on with differing amounts of paint on the roller. Dense foam 4" and 6" rollers were chosen because of the ability to reuse the rollers, their even paint application, and their resistance to getting too "full" of paint. Six

monochromatic shades of paint were selected because they created a cohesive color palette with the two tones of paper used to create the pre-printed posters. It was believed that a simpler color palette would simplify participant's color choices and result in greater success. The paint was distributed in 24 small paint pans or in aluminum backing pans. A small amount of paint was poured into each pan, leaving plenty of surface area to spread paint evenly without getting too much paint on the roller. Paint could also be thinned by running the roller onto Kraft paper that covered the work tables. This allowed the participants to create a layer of paint that was transparent and textured. Participants were encouraged to use any printing technique they chose—rolling paint over stencils, rolling paint without stencils, dripping paint onto paper, or anything they found to make an interesting mark.

Facilities
All three workshops were done in University art rooms, which had ample room for hanging finished posters on large bulletin boards, selecting posters, viewing and selecting stencils, working with stencils and posters, and storing the six 1-gallon paint buckets and the paint pans used for distribution of paint. Smocks or aprons were provided for participant use, and at least one large sink was available in each room and used for cleanup.

THE DESIGN OF POSTER INSTALLATIONS
The initial goal of the poster installations was to present multiple posters together in several high-traffic locations throughout campus. It was believed that using multiple posters would allow for use of a wider variety of posters, as together the posters might create a "collage" effect, allowing posters judged to be "less successful" (ie. not as dynamic or visually interesting) to be grouped with more successful posters. This ability to use a variety of posters would allow for more participants' posters to be used in the final installation, and it was hoped that the use of posters designed by more individuals would trigger greater campus discussion about the posters and mental health issues. It was proposed that this "personalization" of the posters might also give the messages greater weight with viewers who knew a peer had created the posters.

Visual campus survey
The UNK campus is a fairly typical non-urban university. The campus is nearly 235 acres with primarily foot traffic between buildings. In an initial visual survey of campus, it was determined that existing billboard structures were either too small, not in high traffic areas, or could not be "taken over" by a series of 25 x 9" posters. There were few opportunities for large installations of posters on existing campus structures, so it was determined that five wall structures would be built to present the posters at high traffic locations throughout campus.

Temporary wall design
Temporary wall structures (Fig. 5– 7) were designed to be stand 6' tall, with 2' of clearance underneath a 4 x 8' surface area that could hold 8 posters on each of two sides with additional space for information on campus mental health resources, contact information for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline,

8 ft.

4 ft.

6 ft.
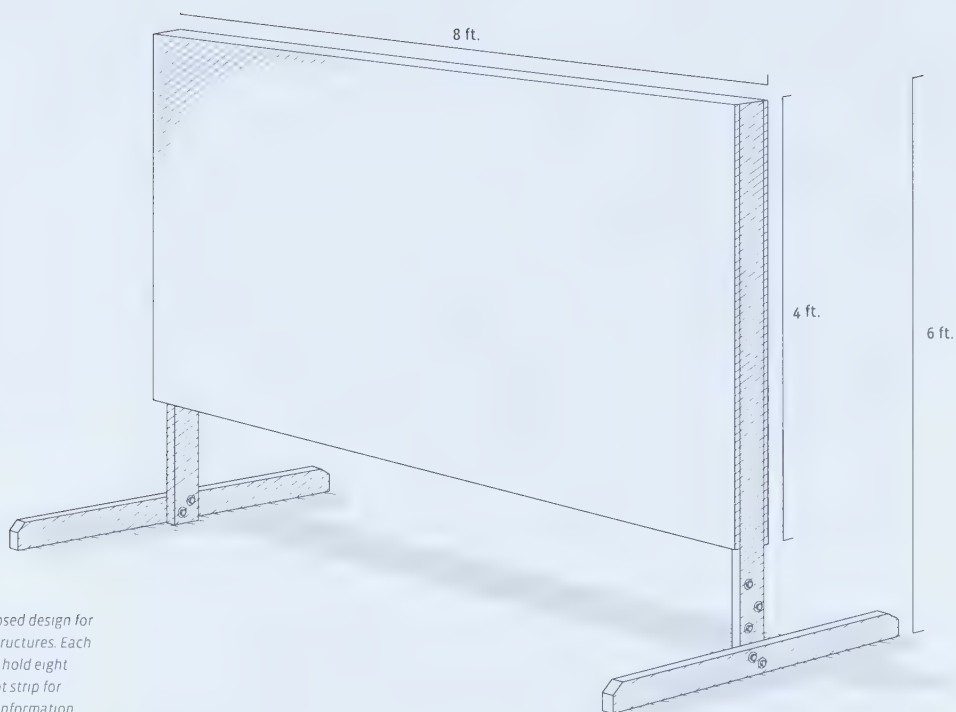
FIG. 5 | *The final proposed design for the temporary wall structures. Each side of the wall could hold eight posters and a one-foot strip for funding and contact information across the bottom*

FIG. 6 | *Modifications were made during construction to give greater strength to the walls*
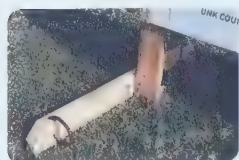
FIG. 7 | *Two-foot long rebar anchored each of the walls at all four corners*

and funding information. The design of these structures was done in collaboration with UNK Vice Chancellor of Business and Finance, Barbara Johnson, UNK Facilities Director, Lee McQueen, and staff who oversaw final construction.

The structures were built out of raw construction lumber, to maintain the feel of crude walls that often surround construction sites. Several factors were considered in their design and construction. High winds are common in Nebraska so the 2' clearance across the bottom was designed to reduce wind drag. The base of the structure was approximately 4' wide and was anchored using 2' long, "J" shaped rebar that was driven into the ground through holes drilled in all four corners of the base structure (Figure 7). The surface of the boards used 14" particleboard, while the rest of the structure was built using 2 x 4" studs. The structure was coated with a clear polyurethane to withstand inclement weather. Posters were adhered and coated using a wheat paste that consisted of water, white flour, and sugar. The use of wheat paste is common in outdoor poster installations because of its low cost, and strong bond to porous surfaces. Once adhered, posters were framed using a ¼" trim board that was tacked on over loose edges. A sixth location was chosen indoors. This installation consisted of over 50 posters being installed onto a bulletin board that lined a hallway within the Fine Arts Building. This hallway was also a high traffic route for travel between buildings.

Positioning of posters
As mentioned, approximately 50 posters were installed inside the UNK Fine Arts Building. Five additional locations had the wall structures installed, which could be viewed from both sides. Three locations were chosen at the center of campus, which is near the Student Union, Student Affairs Building, and the main Library

KEY
● Poster Installation
▥ Student Housing

COMMUTER PARTING

COMMUTER PARTING

CONSTRUCTION AREA

THOMAS   BRUHNER

FIG. 8 | *Map of UNK campus show-ing six installation locations and student housing*

on campus (Fig. 8). These three locations were highly visible for on-campus students due to the proximity to these resources and to academic buildings for science, mathematics, social sciences, and the fine arts. A fourth location was situated on the East side of the Health and Sports Center, where many athletic events, including intramural sports, take place. This location is also a common route for commuters that are parking in University parking lots and attending classes in the central campus buildings. The fifth location was situated just to the East of an area of campus that is separated from the central buildings by several blocks. This part of campus houses the business and nursing schools. This instal-lation was designed to be visible for many students attending classes on West Campus, and also was directly along the path that most students walk when going from West Campus to the central campus buildings.

Selection of posters
The selection of posters for installation (Fig. 9–18) was done in conjunction with UNK healthcare staff. The three workshops resulted in a total of 256 posters. The final installation called for approximately 130 posters to be installed in the six campus locations. Posters were organized according to the six pre-printed messages (ie. drink smart, prevent suicide, reduce stress, etc.) and evaluated on their aesthetic appeal, contrast in tone to other posters, clarity of message, and uniqueness. Consideration was given to the messages that participants indicated were most critical to the UNK campus during the review and discussion phase of the workshop. Nearly 175 posters were chosen for consideration. The posters were then evaluated a second time by the primary researcher and UNK Counseling and Healthcare staff as they were installed. Posters were individually selected based on which message they presented, how their paper and paint color contrasted or complemented other posters, and how their design comple-mented or contrasted posters that would be nearby.

FIG. 9–18 | Student-designed posters
installed in six locations through-
out the UNK campus

FIG. 9 | Student-designed poster

FIG. 10 | Student designed poster

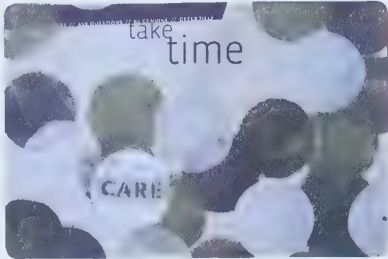FIG. 11 | Student-designed poster

FIG. 12 | Student designed poster

FIG. 13 | Detail of poster installed on temporary wall

FIG. 14 | Detail of poster installed on temporary wall

FIG. 15 | Portion of installation inside Fine Arts Building

FIG. 16 | Installation near Student Affairs Building

FIG. 17 | Installation near Bruhner Hall and Library.

FIG. 18 | Installation near Student union

Analysis of results

Both the methodology and the student posters were analyzed using a variety of methods. Due to the limited scope of this exploratory study, the primary focus was evaluating the impact of workshop methods on participants' willingness to engage in health-related dialogue and their increased awareness of issues and resources. This evaluation was based on the results of three collaborative workshops that included a total of 23 participants. Expert interviews were conducted informally between workshop sessions and formally in a follow-up session. The limited scope of this exploratory study restricted the validity of data collection and analysis. Further exploration and testing would be required to draw strong conclusions on the results of the study.

WORKSHOP RESULTS
The three workshop sessions were facilitated in studio classrooms in UNK's Fine Arts Building. They took place within a week of each other, which was about one month prior to the end of the spring semester. During the workshop sessions, twenty-three pre- and post-test questionnaires were administered

Pre-test Questionnaire
The pre-test questionnaire consisted of five questions:

1   Are poster campaigns on campus an effective way to raise awareness or discussion among UNK students?

2   How likely are you to talk to a fellow student about mental health issues such as depression, substance abuse, or suicide?

3   How likely are you to refer a friend or fellow student to UNK Counseling and Health Services?

4   How aware are you of health-related posters on campus?

5   How comfortable are you when it comes to design- or art-related exercises?

The mean of participant pre- and post-test scores were compared. Most participants agreed that posters were an effective way to raise awareness among UNK students (3.96 out of 5) on question one. On question two, most students reported that they were somewhat likely or likely to talk to a fellow student about mental health issues (3.43 out of 5). Interestingly, students reported being slightly more likely to refer a friend to UNK Counseling and Health Services (3.74 out of 5). When it came to awareness of previous health-related campaigns on campus, the majority of participants felt that they were "somewhat aware" of previous poster campaigns (3.04 out of 5). On the last question, participants' answers revealed that the majority were "somewhat comfortable" or "comfortable" (3.48 out of 5) when it came to art- or design-related exercises.

Although, these results are limited in validity on their own, the pre-test results raised some questions. As mentioned, the students reported a higher level of comfort when referring a friend to UNK Counseling and Health Services than

they did about talking to a friend about mental health issues. Within the scope of this project, follow up to this question was not possible; however, in further research, some understanding could evolve through individual and group discussion over the course of additional workshops. A few things might account for the difference, such as a lack of confidence to talk to peers about serious issues, a belief that mental health issues require professional help, a belief that they would not be able to help, or a sense of not wanting to embarrass that individual. Answers to these questions would be helpful in designing future communication messages for UNK students.

Post-test questionnaire
The first portion of the post-test questionnaire repeated the five questions from the pre-test questionnaire. There was little or no shift in the mean of the first question. Interestingly, one participant shifted his/her answer to "strongly disagree" that posters were effective means of raising awareness on campus in the post-test. Additionally, the number of students who selected "strongly agree" went from 2 on the pre-test to 4 on the post-test. These small shifts, although not statistically significant, would be interesting to understand.

On question two, the mean shifted from 3.43 to 3.83. This represented the largest shift from pre- to post-test. This shift is encouraging, and hints that participants may have developed a greater willingness to engage their peers in talking about mental health issues through the workshop. When comparing pre- and post-test answer tallies, one can see a clear shift in the number of students who responded that they were "likely" or "very likely". In the pre-test, ten students selected one of these two answers, while in the post-test 15 students selected one of those answers. This reflects a 50 percent increase in students who felt "likely" or "very likely" to engage a peer in dialogue about mental health issues.

There was a similar but not quite as pronounced shift in participants' estimation of their likelihood to refer a peer to UNK Counseling and Health Services. The mean shifted from 3.74 to 4.17, while the number of students that responded that they were "likely" or "very likely" rose from 13 to 18 participants—a 38 percent increase.

There was a slight shift in participants' sense of awareness of health-related posters on campus. The mean went from 3.04 to 3.22. Participants who stated they were "aware" or "very aware" of health-related posters increased from six to eight.

Participants' comfort level with art- or design-related exercises had a shift from a mean of 3.48 to 3.7. This increase also was seen in the number of individuals who felt "comfortable" or "very comfortable" with art- and design-related exercises— going from a total of 11 to 15, a 36 percent increase.

These comparative results support a possible increase in participant willingness to talk to peers about mental health issues, refer peers to UNK Counseling and Health Services, and in their comfort level in art- and design-related exercises. Further testing would be required to investigate the validity of these results; however, similar increases were found in the second section of the post-test questionnaire and in the discussion groups.

The second portion of the post-test questionnaire consisted of questions requiring 'yes' or 'no' answers, reflected on a variety of topics, including the participants' experience of the workshop and collaborative methods. Some questions were designed to connect with the pre- and post-test comparison and the group discussion, while others were intended to gain a clearer picture of participants' beliefs and perspectives:

1   Do you feel that this workshop has made you more aware of mental health issues and on-campus resources for assistance with those issues?

2   Do you feel that one or more of your posters are interesting compositions that might be successful in capturing the attention of viewers on campus?

3   Have you learned more about the mental health issues discussed in the workshop?

4   Have you learned more about design and communication in the workshop?

5   Do you feel that this type of workshop could be valuable in the design and production of health-related posters for UNK or other college campuses?

6   Would you participate in a similar workshop again?

7   Would you recommend that a friend take part in a similar workshop?

8   Do you feel that the way (stenciling) the posters were created affect their visual impact and the amount of attention UNK students will give to them?

9   Do you feel that the fact that the posters were created by UNK students will affect the attention or thought other UNK students will give to the messages?

10   Have you ever used the counseling care office on campus?

Based on the results, it appears that the workshop did have an impact on many of the participants' awareness of mental health issues and on-campus resources. The majority of participants (19 of 23) felt they were more aware of mental health issues and on-campus resources due to participating in the workshops, while 13 of 23 felt that they had learned more about mental health issues. In addition, 21 of 23 participants felt they had learned more about design and communication.

At the same time, it appears that most participants had a positive and rewarding experience in the workshop. Twenty-two of 23 participants felt that at least one of their posters created an interesting composition and would be successful in capturing the attention of campus viewers. All 23 participants indicated that they would participate in a similar workshop again, and would recommend the workshop to a friend. These results are particularly interesting as many participants (13 of 23) felt either "not very" or "somewhat" comfortable with art- and design-related exercises.

All 23 participants also felt that similar workshops could be valuable in the design and production of health-related posters for UNK or other campuses. In particular, 20 of 23 participants felt that the use of stenciling would affect the amount of attention and the visual impact the posters had on UNK students. Additionally, 21 of 23 participants indicated that the fact that posters were designed and created by UNK students would also have an impact on the attention and level of engagement given to the posters by other UNK students. Eight of the participants indicated that they had previously used the counseling care office on campus.

These results reflected: the participants' sense of success in effectively designing a poster, growing awareness of mental health issues and on campus resources, and a belief that the outcome of the workshops had the potential to make a substantial impact on campus awareness of mental health issues and on campus resources. This could reflect potential reasons for some of the pre- and post-test shifts. For instance, the indications of greater awareness could have had an influence on the growth in participants that said they were "likely" or "very likely" to talk to peers about mental health issues or refer peers to campus resources.

The number of participants (21 of 23) who reported feeling one or more of their posters was successful may also reflect the growth in the number of participants who felt comfortable with art- and design-related exercises.

The pre- and post-test questionnaire resulted in some fairly big shifts and captured some encouraging responses from participants. These results suggest that the workshops may be a good environment for participant growth, learning, affirmation, inclusion, and sense of purpose. If this outcome could be validated in further research, the methods explored could help increase awareness or modify behaviors in many micro-community settings where existing methods are too costly or cumbersome.

Observation of participants
Throughout the workshops, researchers observed participants' general attitude and level of engagement in the project. These observations were done informally. They were not taken down in noted form during the workshops. This was done in an effort to create more of a natural, creative, and collaborative environment than a "research" environment. Observations that pertained to the length or pace of the immediate workshop were shared between researchers, guiding decisions as to the length of the workshops and when to engage participants in reflection and brief discussion about the methods, approaches, and materials. This flexibility allowed researchers to be more active participants in the workshops and reduced the "clinical" nature of many research environments.

The first two workshops produced fewer posters and were ended earlier than the third workshop. This decision to not push the participants further was due to an observation that the pace of the first two groups appeared to slow as the workshop went past an hour and a half. Additionally, participants were becoming more "distracted" by conversation with other participants or facilitators. This was in contrast to the third workshop, where participants were challenged to finish out 100 posters in the allotted two-and-a-half hours. During this workshop, facilitators observed a greater sense of collaboration, energy, and exploration

in the participants. For instance, several participants began exploring methods of creating posters that had not previously been seen in other sessions. They started using stencils that had paint on them as stamps by pressing them on the posters, as opposed to rolling ink in the holes of the stencils. These "reverse" stencils had unique patterns from the numerous layers of paint on them. Another example was the use of "blotting" techniques, where posters were folded back on themselves to create mirrored ink-blot like images and patters. One student even began to destroy posters by tearing, taping, and wrinkling them. The participants from the third workshop appeared to be energized by the challenge of reaching 100 posters, where it was perceived that a similar challenge may have discouraged the previous two workshops. Interestingly, when the questionnaires were analyzed, nearly half (5 of 11) of the study participants who indicated they were "comfortable" or "very comfortable" with art- and design-related exercises were participants in the third workshop.

Throughout the workshops researchers assisted participants in getting new supplies, looking for specific stencils, thinking through their designs, and creating new stencils in response to participants' needs. It was generally observed that the majority of participants responded positively to the workshops once they began exploring and experimenting with the materials. Over the course of the workshops, the participants generally seemed to become more comfortable with other participants and facilitators, engaging in discussions that ranged from abstract (eg. music, movies, or campus events), to specific (eg. issues of suicide and mental health), to personal (eg. experiences with depression, the counseling center, or stressful life circumstances).

Observations were discussed by researchers and UNK Counseling and Healthcare staff after the completion of each workshop session. These discussions were not formally noted, but helped guide changes to the size and style of additional stencils for following workshops. After the first workshop, a series of larger geometric and image-based stencils were cut for the following workshops. This was in response to observations that participants struggled some with creating contrast in their compositions. Also, it was observed that few participants were using cropping, or running stencils off the sides of their posters. This led to the determination that larger stencils might help, or possibly force participants to explore these visual approaches to poster design. The result was a perceived improvement in the use of size contrast, cropping, and running images off the page in the second workshop. However, during the second workshop, it was observed that the poster messages and words had become overwhelmed by larger images and shapes. In response, larger stencils were created of phrases and single words that could be used in the third workshop. These adjustments gave workshop participants increasingly more diverse and customized tools for creation of posters.

Post-test discussion group
Post-test discussions were facilitated at the end of each workshop session. The discussion groups centered on nine central questions with follow-up questions for clarification and further insight. The questions were aimed at gaining further understanding of the participants' experience and response to the collaborative methods used in the workshop sessions. Additional questions were prepared to

understand how participants perceived design, textual messages, the finished posters, and the decision making process that participants went through in creating their posters:

1   Did you find the workshop interesting or engaging?

2   How did you go about making the decision of which posters to start with and which stencils to use?

3   Of the messages represented on the posters, which ones do you feel are most important for UNK students to hear or be aware of?

4   In obtaining a viewer's attention, do you feel that the content of the image is important? Why or why not?

5   Is there a difference in how you view posters that utilize more abstract images, and posters that use images that tie into the message?

6   Do you feel that participation in this workshop will increase your willingness or odds of talking about mental health issues with a friend?

7   Why did you choose to participate in this project?

8   Were there specific comments, interactions or discussions that were particularly helpful to you throughout the project?

9   Were there elements of the workshop that you found confusing or difficult?

Audio of post-test discussion groups was recorded and transcribed. Notes were not taken during the discussion to allow researchers to interact more naturally with participants, and to observe freely the non-verbal behavior of participants. Researchers met briefly to reflect on the discussion groups after each workshop. Repeated themes were perceived from previous workshops or from repeated comments within each discussion group. Themes or recommended changes to the workshop that had the potential to improve future workshops were discussed, and if agreed upon, were implemented into the following workshops. The majority of analysis was done through coding the content of the transcribed workshop results. Coding was done using a system of underlining, circling, and color-coding to determine central themes that were related to specific questions or to the study as a whole. The transcripts were first analyzed by comparison of the same questions from each workshop, then they were evaluated on the repetition of words or ideas throughout the individual workshops and the workshops as a whole.

The first question confirmed results from questionnaires and through observation. Participants reported that the workshop was fun, interesting, engaging, and comfortable. In particular, participants were a bit surprised by the hands-on, creative nature of the workshop and seemed to find it a refreshing contrast to what they thought of as a research environment. Several students directly mentioned the workshop was an easy environment in which to think about the issues of mental health, and to engage in dialogue in a casual manner:

...I think [the workshop] better that it's done this way because it brings people to where they are more comfortable, it's not such a one-on-one conversation. It's less stress between a group conversation versus a group activity. It's a better way to go. *(participant in workshop 3)*

I thought it was interesting because anyone could come in there and make one of these posters just because of the way you organized it with the stencils and paint. So anyone of any talent could work on it. *(participant in workshop 1)*

I like it [the workshop] because, at the same time it helps you think about the issues that you are trying to convey through your message. I thought it brought my attention to these issues, to the forefront of my mind. *(participant in workshop 2)*

Responses to questions two and three revealed that participants took a very diverse approach to designing their posters, while most chose poster messages according to how they saw the prevalence of the topics in their own life or their peers. Drinking and stress were mentioned as the most prevalent issues faced by students, while depression, knowing how to contact UNK Counseling and Healthcare, and suicide were also mentioned:

I don't think there are many students who are aware of the counseling available or where it is located. I think it's key. *(participant in workshop 2)*

The posters that I chose, I chose on the topics of depression or suicide because I've had a background in depression and everything. So I chose them and when I designed them I designed them as how I felt back when I was depressed and that sort of helped me a little bit. *(participant in workshop 1)*

I tried to use them all a little bit, but I think I focused on the drinking one. Maybe for freshmen, [it] might be able to affect the most people, the posters might [reflect a] more common condition. *(participant in workshop 1)*

Responses to questions four and five revealed how participants felt the imagery would impact viewers' level of engagement with the posters. The majority of comments suggested that abstract imagery would be intriguing and possibly be better suited for posters than literal imagery. However, a few students did question the use of abstract imagery over more literal imagery that reinforced or illustrated the message of the poster:

I think for me sometimes the abstract draws my attention a little bit more because you ask, "what is that?" You don't know right away, so you want to get up closer to see what it is, and then you can see what's written on it... Why is there a toilet on that poster? *(participant in workshop 2)*

the more abstract, you might take longer to look at it because you are thinking about it, or at least I find myself pausing longer to try to actually figure out what all is [happening] there. *(participant in workshop 1)*

> The more literal you go, it can be more powerful or more obscene or shocking. Versus the abstraction it is not so in your face, a general statement in a way—graphically. So I think literal is, you know, you see it visually—it's real and it is what it says, I think it is pretty strong. But the nice thing about the abstract is it becomes more of an art piece in a way and people may be more drawn to that visually.
> *(participant in workshop 3)*

Responses to question six helped gauge whether or not participation in the workshops affected participants' willingness to talk about health related issues with their peers. This question reflected what was seen in the pre- and post-test questionnaires as several participants in each workshop felt that they would be more prepared and willing to engage peers about the issues after their experience in the workshops. In fact, one participant suggested that participation in the workshop could be used as a springboard for discussing tough issues with friends. Two participants in workshop 3 did suggest that it would be difficult to talk about any issues that they had not experienced personally. These comments are particularly interesting, and could warrant follow-up to determine if this is an issue for UNK students. This knowledge could guide future messaging to support students' sense of being able to help someone with a mental health issue:

> It's hard to talk to anybody about a problem with anyone if you haven't experienced it. You can talk about it but you don't understand fully.
> *(participant in workshop 3)*

> ...it [the poster installation] would be a really good way for me to, like, start the conversation, like, "yeah I helped make these posters." And a good conversation starter kind of thing. *(participant in workshop 1)*

> I guess it will help me be more open to it, I guess. I didn't know there was a hotline on campus, for instance. So it will be easier to refer them to that area. And also, taking part in this opened my eyes that some of these issues do take part on this campus, whether people want to see it or not.
> *(participant in workshop 2)*

The main reasons participants gave for participating in the workshops were a previous interest or experience with mental health issues, the perceived uniqueness of the workshops, and the stipend advertised on the recruitment posters.

Responses to the final two questions helped clarify what was helpful and what was confusing in the way the workshop was led or presented. Participants valued the demonstrations at the beginning as they made the process seem simple and easy. It relieved some of the initial stress of participating in the workshop. Additionally, participants felt that viewing others work on the work tables or hanging on the bulletin board was inspirational and motivational for them. The only real criticism directed toward the workshop was the use of the limited color palette. However, in both cases that it was mentioned, participants suggested that more colors may have been too complex for them to handle in the time constraints and pace that was set for the workshops:

> Well, while I was working, I was thinking it would be more helpful to have more colors, but at the same time it would be confusing. Because there would have been too many choices. *(participant in workshop 2)*

> I couldn't have handled it! It was fine. It would have been too much for me. *(participant response to above comment in workshop 2)*

> Your demonstration at the very beginning, that helped. Because even when you explained it, I didn't know exactly how I was going to do it. Like, did you want one image? Or layer it? Your first example helped a lot, kind of got us kick-started to go. *(participant in workshop 1)*

The discussion group supported the sense that the workshop was an informal environment that allowed for creativity, collaboration, and dialogue that could be difficult in other settings. Additionally it supported the data that suggested participants enjoyed the workshop and felt they had participated successfully in it. And although some participants questioned the color palette, the consensus seemed to be that the tools and materials designed for the project were helpful and successful in developing a collaborative environment and giving participants a sense that the posters were "theirs".

> I know personally, I am more likely to—I don't know if respect is the right word— but pay attention to, a poster created by a peer rather than what I would consider a commercial designer. I kind of get immune to that, but if it's a UNK student, I'm like OK. If an issue is present I'm not the only one. It kind of gets it out there, and if it's amongst your peers it's more respectable. (participant from workshop 3)

Evaluation of posters
Researchers reviewed the output of posters from each workshop session. The three workshops produced a total of 255 posters with the quantity of posters increasing from 59 in the first workshop, to 91 in the second workshop, and 105 in the third. These quantities reflected an average output of 9.83, 10.11, and 13.13 posters per participant in the three workshops respectively. The increase in productivity reinforced the observation that the third workshop was more productive. This could have been due to the increased diversity in stencils available, increased clarity in the presentation of methods, the fact that a higher percentage of participants felt comfortable with art- and design-related exercises in the third session, or a combination of these factors. It was suggested in workshop reviews that the effect of the stencils on the third workshop session were minimal because most of the updated stencils had been introduced by the second session, which saw minimal gains in output over the first session. Researchers did not feel that presentation of the methods varied greatly from workshop to workshop, as a trial run with volunteers allowed researchers to test the introduction, demonstration, and printing methods prior to the first workshop. This might suggest that the participants' comfort level with creative activities was a factor in the higher production of posters.

Posters were also evaluated by which messages were chosen by participants. This was proposed as a method to understand which textual messages seemed most important or effective to workshop participants. This could have been another

way of understanding which messages might be most important to implement in future design of communications. After each workshop, the number of each of the six posters available to participants was counted. However, these numbers became hard to track, due to participants choosing posters from stacks that had been set aside for other workshops. Additionally, participants admitted that some posters were chosen just because they were "on top" and space was too limited to spread out each of the six stacks of posters. Totals that were tracked were relatively even, but were determined to be more inaccurate than helpful in evaluating which messages were most important or effective to participants. Had accurate numbers been tracked, they could have confirmed or denied the participants' claims as to which posters they chose and thought were most applicable to peers.

A third method of evaluating the posters was somewhat subjective in that it involved the "grading" of posters based on their aesthetic appeal, contrast in tone to other posters, clarity of message, and uniqueness. Posters were categorized as "good," "average," and "below average". This evaluation was done at the end of all three workshops and facilitated by a four-person team that included the primary researcher and three staff members from UNK Counseling and Healthcare. The evaluation was done first by the primary researcher due to his background in art and design. However, after an initial evaluation, the posters were discussed and shifted from one category to another until a consensus was reached by the team. This grading system was used primarily to select which posters would be installed; however, it also helped in evaluating the "success" of posters from a source other than the participants themselves. Future research could include an evaluation of posters by viewers of the installation through other methods like the suggested focus group. The "success" rate of posters increased with each workshop. This rate was determined by the percentage of posters that were selected as "good" and "average" for each workshop. In the first workshop, 40.7% of the posters fell into these categories, while in the second workshop 51.6% were selected, and in the third workshop, 74.3% of the total posters were selected as "good" or "average". This evaluation again supported the perceived level of success and engagement by workshop participants and also supported the belief that modifications to materials such as new stencils had a positive impact on workshop outcomes.

Questionnaires and discussion groups asked participants to evaluate the potential success of designed posters; however, this line of questioning was more about learning how students perceive posters in general and less about them being able to answer specific to the posters designed in the workshops. Asking them to evaluate the final installation of the posters would have been an impossible task. This type of evaluation would require input from students not involved in the workshops and could be facilitated in future research.

During and after the installation of posters, the primary researcher and UNK Counseling and Healthcare staff discussed the final physical outcome of the workshops. It was agreed that the 8 x 6' poster walls established a very strong presence on campus due to their locations, construction, and contrast to the surrounding environments. There was also a very strong visual connection between installations due primarily to the similar structures, colors,

reproduction means, and organization of posters. During installation, several observers stopped to inquire what the posters were about. The posters also garnered the attention of pranksters during the "dead" week leading up to final exams. One installation was uprooted from the ground, carried several hundred yards, placed at the middle of the university football field, and slightly damaged. A second installation was uprooted and moved just a few yards to the middle of a campus fountain. This unwanted interaction with students was frustrating; however, it still was an interaction that was cause for conversation between students that may have made the campaign more memorable.

At the outset of this project, a primary aim was to give control of the message and outcome to the student community. The temptation for organizations is to regain control when members of the community take resources, efforts, and messages in different directions. This flexing of authority may just serve to reinforce a perceived nature of the intervention and confirm a belief of many in the community who are skeptical about or even hostile to the efforts of community organizations or authority in general. In a micro-community setting, this type of reaction could have profound impacts in a short amount of time. Some attempt to discover who vandalized the installations was made, but when it was discovered that a student who had confided that he knew who was behind the vandalism did not want to divulge the information, the matter was dropped. Interestingly, the student who was hesitant to "rat out" the vandals was a participant in the workshops. In the end, the installations were evaluated as positive outcomes that gained a high level of visibility even over a short two-week period of time.

Several structural observations were made throughout the duration of the installation. First, the structures themselves were quite heavy and cumbersome and could have been made much easier to handle had they been 4 x 6' rather than 4 x 8'. It was felt that the smaller size would have been as visible and more manageable. The construction of the structures by UNK facilities staff was done well and withstood the extreme weather and the vandalism with minimal negative effects. The posters were adhered using wheat paste, which turned out to be less durable in wet weather than required. Without sufficient time to dry, the wheat paste would lose hold, and in the case of the installation that was done directly before the rain began, all the posters slumped off the structure onto the ground as a group, still glued together. To solve this, a light piece of wood trim was used to frame in the other posters after being installed. It was also suggested that the polyurethane coating that was put on the flat sides of the structures may have reduced the ability of the wheat past to penetrate the wood and to bond properly with the surface of the structure.

EXPERT INTERVIEWS
Informal interviews were conducted after each workshop. During these interviews, UNK Counseling and Healthcare staff were consulted on their experience of the workshops. All three staff members found the workshops rewarding in their development of relationships with students. In addition, they were energized and challenged by the students work with the posters. Two of the staff members participated in creating at least one poster in each of the workshops they attended, and said they felt a bit intimidated when doing so. Throughout the

workshops, all three felt the time was valuable and were excited for the instal-
lation of the posters on campus. Additionally, they felt that the approach taken
in the workshops was a unique approach and would result in an outcome that
was far better than their initial plans. The staff members responsible for writing
the grant and overseeing the project revealed that they were excited to present
the methods used in this study to their grant supervisor and peer grant members
from other universities. By the third workshop, all three revealed that the
workshops, including a trial run, had taken a toll on them. The three workshops
took place within four days of each other, and were not during normal work
hours for them. They suggested that if it had not been for the trial workshop, the
time commitment might have been just about right. They also suggested greater
variety of food and music provided during the workshops.

The formal expert interview with the project director Rosalind Sheldon confirmed
much of what was already speculated in the other areas of data collection. The
interview was done over the phone and recorded in note form. The interview
began with reflection on the workshops and four predetermined questions:

1   Were you aware of the posters on campus? If so, did you feel that their
    design and presentation were effective and visible?

2   How easy do you feel it would be to replicate the methods in this project
    for future projects? And do you feel that would be valuable?

3   Have you worked with other methods of generating student involve-
    ment in and input into the design of health communications? If so, which
    approaches were most successful or interesting to you?

4   Do you have any suggestions about approaches or methods that might
    be of interest for future collaborative projects with students?

Sheldon began with an illustrative story about a participant that she has had
contact with since the workshop. The student reflected on how much she
enjoyed the workshop and taking her friends around to see if her posters had
been chosen for installation. The student conveyed that she had no idea what to
expect, but that she "had no idea how much fun it would be."

Sheldon also reflected on her team's experience of the workshops before begin-
ning into the questions. She said they felt that the workshops allowed them to
relate to students in a different way—to be one-on-one with students in a more
casual environment. She felt that the workshops allowed students to see who
they were and that they were personal and not "clinical." She felt that the interac-
tions were more relational and mutual than was possible in many of their typical
interactions with students. Sheldon also reinforced her excitement in presenting
the workshop outcomes to their grant project officer.

The first question was aimed at revealing whether or not Sheldon felt the design
and presentation of posters was successful. Her feedback was that good loca-
tions had been chosen for the final installation, and that the posters success-
fully combined the individual messages with the controlled broad contact and
resource messages across the bottom of the presentation boards. She suggested
that there were many variables that may have increased the interaction of the

posters, such as progressive messages that built on previous installations—enticing viewers to view all the boards placed around campus.

Sheldon felt that one of the "biggest pieces" to this project was the student contribution. She conveyed that several participants, and even her staff, were excited to see their posters, and kept saying, "look there's my poster." This sense of ownership was one of the most important factors to Sheldon.

As for the poster design, Sheldon thought the approach was well executed and that participants engaged with the messages and picked the themes they felt were important. She suggested that an additional poster on substance abuse could have been beneficial and that they were thinking about other related subjects for future workshops, but that the messages were, as a whole, on target.

Sheldon reflected that the workshop environment was a relaxing environment and that they were able to talk about sensitive subjects without embarrassment. The environment reinforced her belief that students prefer to interact with an activity, not just be taught about mental health issues. She did say that although the workshops facilitated a low-key way to talk about the subjects, she noticed that students were still more comfortable talking about alcohol and other topics than suicide itself.

The second question was designed to explore how easy Sheldon felt it would be for her team to replicate the workshop environment with little reliance on outside resources. She felt that given the right resources, the workshops would be fairly easy to replicate. She identified the printing and design of preprinted posters would be the most difficult thing to replicate. She also felt that access to stencils, assistance in choosing paint colors, some consultation time, and justification for methods would be helpful. She suggested that a toolkit could allow many people to do it on their own. Ideally, the toolkit would include the preprinted posters; however, the ability to customize the messages of the posters would be helpful.

Sheldon felt that the project offered a lot of benefit for the amount of time it took to coordinate and facilitate—the time between initial discussion and completion of the project was less than one semester.

The temporary installation boards that were designed were bulky and a storage concern, but Sheldon felt that they would be used for several years and were well worth the effort. In addition, she felt that the total cost of materials for the project was affordable.

The third question was aimed at getting feedback on other approaches that have been used in developing student involvement and input in the communication of health messages. UNK is exploring the use of online applications such as Facebook and other more word-of-mouth approaches to reach students with health messages. They have successfully used prizes such as iPods in generating responses to projects or needs in the past. Although Sheldon felt that there was a good turnout for the workshops—and that each was an appropriate size—she felt that the limitations on recruitment methods were more stringent than necessary for their typical projects. She suggested using faculty and students to recruit more persuasively, and recognized that the use of stipend or other

promotions was important for getting participation from a diverse student sampling, including marginalized and those who were not inherently interested in the topics of mental health.

The final question was if there were any suggestions or approaches that could be helpful for future projects. Sheldon felt that combining the workshops with a larger event may create more awareness and result in greater impact among UNK students. She also suggested that a clearer description of the workshop methods would be helpful in recruiting. The use of online voting for best posters could have the potential to increase viewership among UNK students, while a larger, more public work environment may give the workshops more visibility; however, it would hamper the sense of anonymity and development of trust.

Sheldon ended the interview by relaying that one workshop participant received counseling since the workshops, and that two others have developed a regular relationship with Counseling and Health Services staff. She suggested that this project was about "chipping away at the issue of suicide, and it's just how we have to do it."

Through the informal and formal interviews, many of the themes perceived in observations and alluded to in the questionnaires were repeated. In particular, the interviews helped in gaining further insight into how the methods may be of interest to health care or community workers. It also began to shed some light on what kind of resources may be needed for replication of these methods by community leaders.

Conclusion

> One reason why there is not more support for social design services is
> the lack of research to demonstrate what a designer can contribute to
> human welfare. *(Victor Margolin and Sylvia Margolin, 2002, p. 28)*

This study was undertaken to explore the application of inclusive design
methods to an underserved, but important, social issue situated within micro-
community settings. The intent was to explore research methods, and gain some
insight into a specific methodological approach to a specific design issue and
cultural setting. The aim was not to answer definitively, but to raise important
questions and obtain greater understanding of the value of collaborative design
workshops in communicating health messages in micro-community settings. In
a sense, the project was about answering whether or not these questions are
worth asking and if they are the right questions. It is in the exploration of new
questions that the field of design might be able to broaden its visibility and
application. The formation of questions that reflect the specific interests of other
disciplines is a first step in bringing creative, practical design approaches to
underserved social issues or settings. Through common language and under-
standing, designers might raise the awareness of design methods which might
be valuable in communicating social issues in micro-community settings.

STUDY LIMITATIONS

This study was exploratory, so conclusions cannot be drawn from it with confi-
dence. Replication of results in other settings, testing of the impact of visual
installations, and expanded expert interviews would be the primary focus of
further research. Testing in diverse cultural and population settings from rural to
metropolitan to immigrant populations may also help in evaluating the value of
these methods across a broad spectrum.

As mentioned, the cancellation of the follow-up focus group limited the evalua-
tion of the installations themselves, and would have required far more than just
the one focus-group to truly gain understanding of their impact. Additionally,
better control over some of the workshop statistics, such as how many of each
pre-printed poster design were used by participants, might be of value for future
workshops and lead to greater understanding of the relationship between
research components.

There are also several areas of research that share similar participatory or
democratic philosophies but were not able to be explored in depth. Some of the
more interesting areas for potential future study include: hermeneutics, musical
improvisation, participatory theatre, grounded theory, and partnership coaching
models. These areas may provide additional depth and understanding regarding
the interactions and methods used in this study, but due to the scope of the
Master's thesis project could not be pursued.

SUMMARY

The collaborative design workshops were well-received, both by participants and UNK Counseling and Healthcare staff members. This reception is a promising indicator of potential value in the design of health-related communications for small communities. The environment created through the workshops seemed to engage participants, encourage dialogue, and generate openness to discuss personal or difficult topics.

Many of the materials and design methods used in the workshops functioned quite well during the workshops. Alterations to methods and materials were minimal over the course of the workshops, with the largest being the creation of larger-scale stencils. A few decisions about design and materials seemed to be critical factors in the success of the workshops: limited color palette, larger size of the posters and stencils, the use of paint rollers with latex paint, and installation onto unique temporary structures.

Feedback from UNK staff suggested that there was potential for fairly easy replication of the workshops with minimal consulting and the development of a workshop toolkit. They also indicated that the environment was particularly helpful to them in developing relationships and gaining further understanding of student participants. The high percentage (22 of 23) of students who indicated they felt at least one of their designs was successful was very encouraging.

For the principal researcher, workshops were a valuable experience and an exciting environment in which to participate. The interaction with students would be helpful for additional workshops or even for the design of traditional mass marketing materials for a similar audience and message. Not only was working with the students enlightening, it also was humanizing and unifying. Several students shared personal stories of struggle with stress, depression, or other life issues. Observing the interaction between students was encouraging, as students who probably had little in common, and may have dismissed each other in other settings, seemed to be more empathetic, or at least engaged with each other in discussing, creating, and exploring.

The collaboration with health staff revealed some of the unique challenges faced by university health workers and community workers in general. In addition, this collaboration revealed areas of expertise and knowledge that designers may not be aware of without such in-depth interactions. This awareness and knowledge impacted not only the design methods but also the presentation and initiation of these methods and the philosophy behind them.

The resulting posters seemed to have a strong visual presence individually and in groups. Posters that were judged by themselves to be average or below average, appeared to have more visual appeal as part of a larger group of posters. At the same time, posters that were visually intriguing on their own blended in to the larger assemblage, and although still very dynamic, did not stand out from the whole. This "leveling" affect might allow for greater inclusion when selecting posters for future installations. It appeared that mediocre posters had little negative impact on the overall visual appeal of larger groups of posters.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Continued testing of workshop methods in diverse settings, the evaluation of outcomes, and further feedback from experts within both design and other disciplines (eg. healthcare, community development, etc.) are the next step to determining the value of collaborative design workshops. Evaluating how workshop success, both through participants' and community perception, is affected by reduced reliance on outside resources would be of interest in determining the methodology's potential for replication across a region or organization. This type of replication would likely require a toolkit and/or curriculum for consistent workshop facilitation and organization, and could be a fairly large undertaking. However, developing a method that could be replicated in this fashion could be a model for action and would have many benefits for organizations doing community development or health care within marginalized community settings. These same methods could also be a valuable resource for grant organizations such as the Suicide Prevention Resource Center and educational systems.

Further explorations could center on how to engage campus or community organizations (eg. fraternities, student organizations, etc.) in the design of posters, therefore taking advantage of existing social structures where information and dialogue are already taking place. It would also be of great benefit to research similar collaborative methods integrated into larger, targeted, diverse, school-based programs.

Altering of methods to focus more on participant dialogue, understanding, and possibly even therapy could be done. This approach may put less emphasis on a public awareness outcome and could target specific audiences who were higher risk populations or had previously exhibited suicide ideation.

A shift in the methods in the opposite direction could also be beneficial. Focusing more on the spread of public awareness through integration of mass media or grassroots networks (eg. Facebook, Myspace) could create greater visibility of the posters in larger university settings.

Diverse methods of evaluating participant experience, growth in awareness, and willingness to engage health-related dialogues with peers would allow for greater reliability and generalizability in the data and result in increased collaborative approaches in micro-community settings. These methods of evaluation might include individual follow-up interviews, the use of post-workshop vignettes, or direct comparison to traditional educational interventions to determine the educational value of collaborative workshops.

FINAL COMMENTS

The use of collaborative, human-centered methods may open the door for design to have greater influence in social, political, and educational organizations. These methods might also be a part of creating a broad understanding of design that might position design as a strategic partner and valuable asset for the betterment of society. This thesis study was an attempt to illustrate the potential benefits of human-centered design methods in micro-community settings. It is hoped that the methods encourage greater collaboration between designers, social organizations, and the people they serve. In addition it is hoped that this study clearly documents the unique, valuable knowledge that design brings to

health communications for micro-communities—encouraging a broader view of the design field and its value to a wide variety of social issues that are currently underserved by design.

Micro-communities will continue to be challenging communication settings that always requires community interaction and ownership to succeed; however, designers who are empathetic to these communities and are prepared to work with human-centered methods can make a difference.

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Appendix A

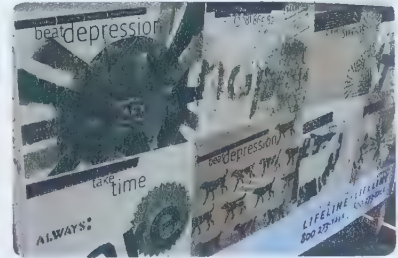### ADDITIONAL WORKSHOP POSTER PHOTOGRAPHS

Detail of installation near Library

Installation near Student Affairs Building

Installation near West Center

Detail of installation near Student Union Building

Detail of installation near Student Affairs Building
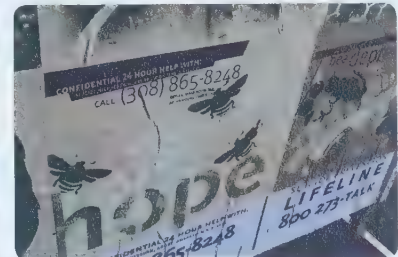
Detail of installation near Fine Arts Building
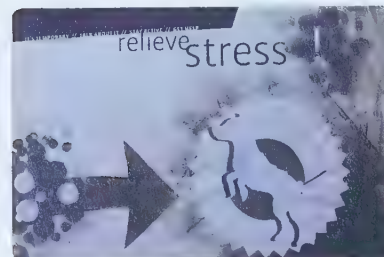
Poster detail.
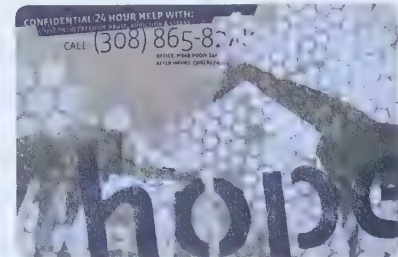
Poster detail

Appendix B

Small to medium animal stencils
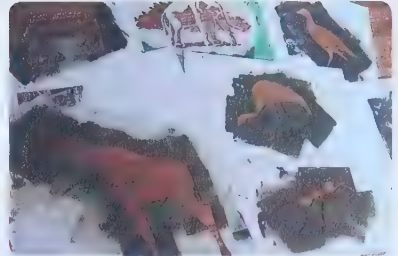
Medium to large animal stencils

Small to medium image stencils

Large, medium, and small text stencils

Small and medium text stencils.

Single letter stencils

Geometric shape and pattern stencils.

Large text stencils

Appendix C

Researcher Hopefully we can get some good feedback, not only about views about these issues but also about views about this process. This is exploratory like I mentioned, we are just trying to see if it will be valuable, if it is a good approach in certain settings. So we're not attached to this as a process, I would just ask you to be as honest about the process as you can, with no desire or, you know, inherent need for this to be viewed as "hey this was a great experience" or not, so we're not going to be offended if you say " i was bored" or whatever. So just as honest as you can in your answers, this is more helpful than anything. Your time and trying this out is really valuable to us just to get some experiences, and hear about your experiences to see how we can make some changes or vary some things, even before the next workshops. We have one Saturday and Sunday, so if you have thoughts on what could possibly be interesting to try or do, feel free to share that. We may integrate some of that into the coming workshops, so I have a series of about nine questions I'll ask, and just ask that you give me some input if you have thoughts on any of it as we go. The project is designed to discover the value of what I'd call collaborative design, which is this, I as the designer design the posters, make the stencils, select the colors, and try to make it to where sort of the possibilities are a little bit limited but at the same time fairly endless so that you guys can explore things fairly quickly and not have a lot of too much ground to cover in a short amount of time. I guess I'll just start on the questions. The first question I have is, did you find the workshop was interesting or engaging? Any insight into what you felt about it, if you thought it was too long, too short, any of that would be of interest to us.

Student I thought it was very engaging in that I enjoyed the topics and it was good to talk about this in a casual setting.

Researcher Thank you.

Student I think that you made design a part of it, instead of like a focus group where we just talked about it. We actually had some way to engage in it, and I think that made it a lot more interesting.

Student And also, kind of what you said, also helped me to engage other people that we don't even know-not directly-

Researcher	The camera has the lens on, so don't be afraid of it being pointed in your face! Any other thoughts on, was it interesting or engaging, or even what aspects of it did you find most engaging or interesting?
Student	I thought it was interesting because anyone could come in here and make one of these posters just because of the way you organized it with the stencils and paint, so anyone of any talent could work on it.
Researcher	Okay, I'm just curious about how you made the decisions about which posters to start with, and which stencils you used. Did you have a process to decide which posters/stencils you used, or was it just sort of random?
Student	I looked at the key words on the top of the posters, like the drinking one, "drink" or alcohol, and just thinking about that and then went looking for stencils.
Researcher	Okay. So you are matching the stencils to whichever poster you are working on. Did you consciously decided which poster maybe were more important to use, or did you just try to use them all?
Student	I tried to use them all.
Researcher	Anybody else?
Student	I tried to use them all a little bit, but I think I focused on the drinking one, maybe for freshmans, might be able to affect the most people, the posters might be more common condition. (parts were inaudible)
Researcher	You feel that it might be more common at UNK?
Student	Yeah.
Researcher	Any other ways that you made decisions on how to select posters or stencils?
Student	The posters that I chose, I chose on the topics of depression or suicide because I've had a background of depression and everything, so I chose them and when I designed them I designed them as how I felt back when I was depressed and that sort of helped me a little bit.
Researcher	Great. Thank you. I guess we've already mentioned this, but let me ask this again. Of the messages represented on the posters, which ones do you feel are most important to UNK students to hear or be aware of, are there ones that are critical for your peers to hear?
Student	Definitely alcohol and depression.
Researcher	Alcohol and depression.

Student	Also at the same time we see someone...those two topics...outside those two...there are some who are affected in that sense....(quite inaudible)
Researcher	These posters will be posted up on big, sort of temporary walls that will be on campus in five different locations, they are about five foot by eight foot, we'll select about 80 of them to go up over the next two weeks. So we are curious about your prediction about which posters or images might attract people's attention the most, or which types of posters for obtaining a viewer's attention, do you feel the content of the image is important, why or why not? So is the content of the stencils that you chose, is it important that they relate to the topic of suicide or depression in gaining a viewer's attention? Does that make sense?
Student	I'd say not at all, because the first thing they are going to see is, of course the picture. So it doesn't matter what it is, if they see it and they get interested and then they go look at it, and then they'll see the text, and understand that, okay, it's a poster about alcohol and they're using abstract ideas to get our attention and it doesn't matter how you get it, as long as you get it.
Researcher	Okay, does any one else feel similar?
Student	Well, I think not necessarily just about the contrast, but also about......(inaudible)
Researcher	Is there a difference in how you view posters that utilize more abstract images and posters that use images that tie into the message? Do you feel like one is more appropriate or does it matter that the image ties into the message, or the image is completely abstract from the message?
Student	I think more the problem of a designer is getting the person's attention as they walk by the poster. I mean, there are a lot of posters on out there, ...just getting the attention, no matter how you do it.
Student	It's like a lot of times the more abstract, you might take longer to look at it because you are thinking about it, or at least I find myself pausing longer to try to actually figure out what all is doing there.
Researcher	Okay. Do you feel that your participation in this workship will increase your willingness or odds about talking about mental health issues with a friend? Some of the issues we've talked about here, do you think it would encourage you, help you feel more free to talk about these issues or point someone to these resources.
Student	If i did notice one of my friends having one of these problems and we were just friends walking down the campus and saw some of these posters, it would be a really good way for me to, like, start the conversation, like "yeah i helped make these posters" and a good conversation-starter kind of thing.

Student	General exposure..more .....the more that's out there the more... there's many different ways to get a message across, this is a great way to start. (inaudible in parts)
Researcher	Thank you.
Student	It's a good way to start the whole thing because it seems like now adays talking about mental health issues or anything along those lines seems taboo, so this is a good open door and getting people to be more concerned and ....(inaudible)
Researcher	Why did you guys chose to participate in the project?
Researcher	Part of the reason for that question, is this is a three year grant and we are hoping to do similar if not the same kind of workshops over the next three or two years, and we are curious about why people participate and what we might be able to do to encourage people to participate.
Student	I know personally I am more likely to- I don't know if respect is the right word- but pay attention to, a poster created by a peer rather than what I would consider a commercial designer. I kind of get immune to that, but if it's a UNK student, I'm like OK, if an issue is present I'm not the only one. It kind of gets it out there, and if it's amongst your peers it's more respectable.
Student	One of the reasons I did it, was just the uniqueness of the workshop. I've never heard of anything like that, come design and make posters about mental health. I thought it was a really good idea, myself.
Researcher	Did you guys know what you were coming here to do?
Student	Not exactly, but just the fact that we were designing posters.
Student	I saw the little "tents" up on the cafeteria tables, and this is the first time I've ever paid attention to those! Just 'cause the idea seemed, an issue with a design element, kind of well, I kind of have a background in both areas, so it's kind of a way for me to put this into really attractive to me because of the way I'm attached to it, I guess.
Student	I did it because I suffer with depression. I'm currently being treated for it, and I know I'm not the only one on campus, but there are a lot more people who are either too afraid to come forward and see if there's something wrong with them, or they think they will be shunned or something if they find out they have a mental illness, so I did it to get it out on campus.
Student	...and so when I saw the poster I thought, wow, this is a good idea and a simple way to help ....how could I help raise awareness, or where to start, so .....(parts inaudible)

Researcher	Were there specific comments or discussions that were helpful to you throughout the project? Anything that was helpful to you?
Student	Your demonstration at the very beginning, that helped. Because even when you explained it, I didn't know exactly how I was going to do it. Like did you want one image? or layer it? Your first example helped a lot, kind of got us kick-started to go.
Researcher	Did you feel like it would be helpful to have more than one demonstration?
Student	I think what we had was efficient because then it keeps us thinking for ourselves.
Researcher	Good.
Student	...carefree, no stress...I don't have art background or skill for that matter...but this environment it doesn't matter,......(parts inaudible)
Researcher	Do you feel like it would be helpful to see other examples or more examples at the beginning if I'd pulled some examples from other workshops on the wall? Or would that keep you from thinking for yourselves?
Student	It might depend on what examples you show. Like, do you show the best from the other workshops? It might discourage us a little. I'm gonna work really hard, spend the whole time--but if you show a wide variety, like it doesn't matter if it's really simple or really thought-provoking.
Student	I would agree with that because .....that level..but yeah, inspire ideas with posters also.....(parts inaudible)
Researcher	Any other things that were helpful or beneficial throughout the process?
Student	A lot of it was asking us to ...work on some of this stuff and ....get back to work or something like that. This is a disciplined atmosphere ....it was kind of dealt with so that it's easier to......(parts inaudible)
Researcher	Were there elements of the workshop that you found confusing or difficult to figure out how to do? That background noise is going to kill our audio.
Student	It seems like every time you stop it starts going...
Researcher	Anything that you thought was confusing or maybe needed more explanation or discussion?
Student	When I came here I didn't ...like hand drawing, like that, and then I got here and it's just like ....stuff that was okay...(parts inaudible)
Researcher	Did you find that you were glad about that, or were you kind of like, oh?

Student	Either way, it wouldn't have mattered. I was kind of hoping it would be a hand-drawn thing, doing ideas with that, but being able to use the stencils and once you showed us with the demonstrations then it was like, okay, I can ....something that I thought about was that.... design thing...will I ever be able to do this..I'm not sure how you would do that now....(parts inaudible)
Researcher	Any stencils or imagery that you would perceive as being good things to have? or interesting things to see?
Student	....completely inaudible)
Researcher	Well that's all the questions that I have, so , if you have your forms filled out make sure that if you have questions on the one...

Appendix D

Researcher	First of all I first want to ask, did any of you find the workshop interesting or engaging? Was it different than you expected? Were there times where you thought it wasn't quite what you expected? What are your thoughts on it?
Participant	I was pretty engaged. I guess I peeked in on a different one before, so I knew what to expect, yeah, it was pretty fun. It was engaging.
Participant	A lot more hands-on than I thought it would be; I thought it was going to be more collaborating ideas, just talking over the issues.
Researcher	Was that something you thought would be better or just different?
Participant	I like it because, at the same time it helps you think about the issues that you are trying to convey through your message. I thought it brought to my attention these issues, to the forefront of my mind.
Researcher	Okay.
Participant	....I thought it would be not-so-hands on also, but I'm glad it was, because it was a lot of fun.
Researcher	Any other thoughts? No, you don't have to say anything.
Participant	I guess I didn't really expect to come in here and use stencils, but it ended up being a lot of fun.
Researcher	How did you guys make decisions about which posters and stencils to use? Were there any things that were critical about how you made those decisions? Were you consciously trying to convey a message, or were you just having fun with different images? What was your thought process?
Participant	Well, to me it was more like relieving stress...that's what I see among my friends and myself, that's what I was moving towards.
Researcher	So you chose that one because...
Participant	Like what I see around me more, like drinking among my friends, drinking like my friends is more, this is how I made my decisions.
Participant	I try to convey message, picked the colors that would work, like with the darker color and use a lighter color on top to make

something stand out, to make someone want to look at it and think about it.

Participant   I think I did both, trying to say something with color to make certain words stand out.

Researcher   Okay. Any other ways you thought about those stencils/ posters?

Participant   I liked the big words, on top. I noticed that one a lot, it really stood out to me so I figured it would stand out to other people.

Researcher   Of the messages represented on the six posters, which ones do you feel are the most important for UNK students to hear or be aware of? You mentioned stress as a big one.

Participant   I think the drink smart poster was very applicable to our campus. I don't know, a lot of kids think drinking excessively rather than just going out socially with friends, they ....(inaudible) I think that's an issue that needs to be brought up.

Participant   Also the one about counseling. I don't think there are many students who are aware of the counseling available or where it's located. I think it's key.

Researcher   Any other ones, or does any one else think the same ones for different reasons?

Participant   I thought they were all applicable in some way to students. And I think some of them, like depression, some people who are going through that think they are the only ones, so I think it's good to have it out there so they don't think they are the only ones suffering.

Researcher   This is kind of a complicated question. Now, in gaining a view's attention, do you feel that the content of the image is important? And why or why not?

Participant   I don't think it's important to get their attention, but if you have a long message you probably want it to relate. If your only desire is to grab their attention for 2 seconds, which there's not lot of words on these, so just for a few seconds, i think any random image, actually the more random or the more unusual it is, that might be more effective.

Participant   (inaudible)...a lot of students won't read it. they see the image first, but won't take time to read it.

Researcher   Do you feel like the images we used and how we applied them using stencils will be pretty visible?

Participant   I do, I think it is really good, also how you said there will be all over campus, there will be a lot of them. I think that will be really effective to have them. Because some times the posters are stuck on a bulletin board and not every body stops and reads all of them on

the board. They all start to look the same, 8.5X11 paper, and sometimes they use neon paper, but still they all start to look the same, so I think it is really effective to have them all over. And uniformity, enough that, color for this evening (inaudible)

Researcher   Any other thoughts on the images?

Participant   I thought you had a lot of images that related to the subject matter in the most obvious sense. It might be too shocking to some people, but you could have syringes or an arm, you know what i mean, you could have people getting really wasted, passed out on the floor. That might be good for some people, but might not be so much for other. I know, one of the things especially at counseling center here they don't want to use scare tactics. Most of these, even the giraffe with his head being cut off, isn't that intense.

Participant   Given the chances to use your mind, and think about it in a different way. We could be creative with them, to make people actually look at it and think about it.

Researcher   Is there a difference in how you look at posters that use more abstract images like the giraffe versus the posters that really tie in the message? How do you view them, does it affect you? Yeah, I guess I'll just ask that. It doesn't have to be about these posters, just in general, if you see a poster that has a more abstract image versus one that has an image that ties in to the message, do you look at it differently?

Participant   I think it all depends on that person, on the student. Because these ones make you think a little bit more about what is the meaning behind them? And this picture just came to you, and you have to think a little bit more to tie it into the image.

Participant   I think for me sometimes the abstract draws my attention a little bit more because you ask, what is that? you don't know right away, so you want to get up closer to see what it is, and then you can see what's written on it. Why is there a toilet on that poster? (laughter)

Researcher   Do you feel that your participation in this workshop will increase your willingness or odds of talking about mental health issues with a friend?

Participant   I think that I'm already pretty comfortable doing that because I was an R.A., so we got training for that, so I guess that's something I've already done.

Participant   I guess it will help me more open to it, I guess. I didn't know there was a hotline on campus, for instance. So it will be easier to refer them to that area. And also taking a part in this opened my eyes that some of these issues do take part on this campus, whether people want to see it or not.

Researcher	Any other thoughts on that? Why did you guys choose to participate in the workshop?
Participant	I don't get enough time to do stuff with other people like this, so yeah, that's for me why I came. I know we talked about this, but I would have come anyway.
Participant	It's a great stress reliever for finals. It's a great stress relieving exercise in a lot of ways.
Researcher	So was this time, with it being near the end of the semester, was it an okay time?
Participant	Oh yes.
Researcher	Do you think that there would be more people who would make it here if we did it earlier in the semester or would it be similar?
Participant	I think it would be the same.
Researcher	Were there specific comments or interactions or discussions we had that were helpful to you in the process? Or seeing something?
Participant	Seeing people work and also discussing with them the ideas they had. Because I've never done anything with art before, ever; pretty difficult at first but I found myself more creative as time went along.
Researcher	In the end how did you feel about it?
Participant	In the end I thought I had some good ones. I was pleased.
Researcher	Good. Anything else that you guys thought was helpful throughout the process? Important even?
Participant	I agree about there being other people here, if I was here doing it by myself it would have been way different. To be able to pull other ideas from people, seeing what they were creating.
Researcher	Did you feel that the demonstration was enough of a demonstration? Or what was your thoughts on that?
Participant	You did a fine job.
Researcher	Was it helpful?
Participant	It was a good way to get our ideas going.
Researcher	Okay. Was there a need for more, later on, using other things?
Participant	No.
Researcher	Were there elements of the workshop that you found confusing or difficult? Number one, we appreciate your honesty, knowing that this isn't something that we have preconceived ideas about nor are we tied in to or feel like it has to turn out good. So if there are any other comments, about things we can improve-- whether it's about

different kinds of stencils or the colors or the process anything-- that you can say that you think might be interesting, i'd love to hear it. It won't be offensive, we're not tied into this. Your opinion is valuable, so if there are things that you would change we would love to hear about it.

Participant   Well, the one that I said helped me, I actually did that because I have gone to the counseling center a couple of times. I did Be a friend, I like it a lot too, because I have a lot of friends. (laughs)

Participant   I like the colors, I think it's good.

Participant   They're not going to attack people visually who are walking by. But they are plenty bold enough, obviously.

Researcher   Is there is anything we could add or change in the future?

Participant   Well while I was working I was thinking it would be more helpful to have more colors, but at the same time it would be confusing. Because there would have been too many choices.

Participant   I couldn't have handled it! It was fine. It would have been too much for me, who's only taken art structure, and you would have to be really good at it to make good decisions for colors.

Researcher   That's really all the questions I have for this. Thank you again for taking the time, I hope you feel this was well worth your time. Take a look next week, posters should be up by Monday or Tuesday. The posters will be up on big walls that will be out along the sidewalks here and on west campus, so take a chance to walk around and probably find one of yours somewhere,

Participant   Can we steal our own poster? (laughs)

Researcher   No, please don't steal them off the wall.

Researcher   Anybody can answer, if you think of something related to this that might be of interest, but do you think this was interesting or engaging for any of you?

Participant   Yes.

Participant   Yeah, I think it's better that it's done this way because it brings people to where they are more comfortable, it's not such a one on one conversation. It's less stress between a group conversation vs a group activity, it's a better way to go.

Participant   I think I would say the posters will be more effective this way because they are hand done rather than printed like regular posters. They will grab people's attention.

Researcher   What do you think about them will grab the most attention?

Participant   Well, you put more than one together, right? And then because they are large and they will stick out because most of them have something weird going on. A little shock factor on some of them. The pretty nice green colors, too. (laughter)

Researcher   You like the green colors? Do you think they should have a change in colors?

Participant   No way.

Participant   Me too, I like the colors.

Participant   I think it distracts, it just shows paint.

Researcher   Any other thoughts about the workshop in general?

Participant   It was a good stress reliever for me. Sugar, fats and paint!

Researcher   That would be a good poster: sugar, fats, and paints, a good stress reliever! Anything else?

Participant   It also got us engaged with each other. Not all of us knew each other before and we got along pretty well, just had a good time. Yeah.

Researcher   How did you go about making the decision about which poster to start with and which posters to use?

Participant	What was on top.
Researcher	You just chose what was on top? Okay.
Participant	I took a literal approach on some of mine, and not so much abstract, non objective. Because it was easier.
Researcher	So you started with what the poster message was, then tried to select a stencil to go along with that?
Participant	Yes.
Participant	I picked the ones that I related to a lot, like the relieve stress one, because most people who don't go through depression or contemplate suicide usually go through stress. I used that one a lot because I could relate with it.
Researcher	Any other ways that you guys selected either stencils or posters?
Participant	I grabbed the stencils first and then the posters that could relate to.
Participant	I think I did the same thing on some of them. But a lot of it was what maybe a metaphoric thing that would relate to the subject matter so you know it doesn't necessarily strictly show you what it is it is just an interpretation. There are so many ways to interpret it or display it and some are probably better communicated than others, probably because some of us have been exposed to other people's interpretations and what they know as background. So it kind of depends on who you are and what you've seen and experienced.
Researcher	Of the messages represented by the six different posters that you started with, which ones do you feel are most important for UNK students to hear or be aware of? There were six different ones: stress, take time, depression, drink smart, suicide, be a friend.
Participant	Drink smart. Stress relief.
Participant	Well, stress can lead to a lot of those other problems too.
Researcher	So drinking and stress, and the contact information on the side?
Participant	Stress leads to depression, depression leads to suicide so they are all related in some way. I think those two.
Researcher	Okay. Is there a difference in how you view posters that utilize more abstract images, or ones that use images that tie in--could be these posters or posters you've seen in general--but is there a difference in how you see a more abstract image or a more literal image?
Participant	I think there is. The more literal you go, it can be more powerful or more obscene or shocking. Versus the abstraction it is not so in your face, a general statement in a way-- graphically. So I think literal is, you know, you see it visually-- it's real and it is what it says, I think it is pretty strong. But the nice thing about the abstract is it becomes

more of an art piece in a way and people may be more drawn to that visually.

Participant   The ones that you want to look at...as long as you get someone to look at it they will take the time to see what it says and how it affects them.

Researcher   Do you feel that your participation in this workshop will increase your odds or willingness to talk about mental health issues with a friend?

Participant   No. if it's not something that is personally in your life, or you haven't seen the effects of it, you don't really think about it. It's not in your realm.

Participant   It's hard to talk to anybody about a problem with anyone if you haven't experienced it, you can talk about it but you don't understand it fully.

Participant   I think so much of it depends on where you put these posters location wise. If you put these out in general public area, it is going to get some people to talk. But if you put it in college dorm rooms, and if you made it mandatory..not mandatory.. but if you put it in a setting where there's a lot of people just living outside of school, they are just living their normal way, because people act different when they're in school than they do out of school. And so if you engage in that area where they are themselves, and their thoughts are clicking, it might actually make a difference. Hard to say.

Participant   Could you get more people to look at them if you had a contest after you picked your 80 and had the general population vote on which ones they liked best? Make them look at them?

Participant   You could even take this to a different level and take photos of the whatever it is, you know trading cards,or something that relates, maybe you picked the top so many and took that design or composition and took it to another level besides just a poster, something people could take with them, maybe a t-shirt. Or some kind of other design with it. Taking the design that worked good as a poster, what's to say it won't work well in another medium?

Participant   I think what will help is quantity in one area. If it was just one poster by itself it wouldn't be as effective. But if it filled up a wall--

Participant   Yeah, you said these would be up around a lot?

Researcher   There will be five temporary walls that will each have 16 posters on them.

Participant   Will there be one in this building?

Researcher   They will be outdoors, (explains where on campus they will be, outside) They will be coated with wheat paste, plastered up on the walls.

Participant	You are making the walls?
Researcher	There are pre-made construction type walls. Why did you guys choose to participate in the project?
Participant	He made me. (laughter—pointing to other participant).
Participant	I love art.
Participant	This was the first time that I've ever done something that related to this topic. I think this is the first time I've ever pushed design in this manner so it was a good experience. A different thing you don't normally think about designing for: an emotion or an experience. You aren't usually presented that kind of topic.
Participant	Any time you are given a poster this big and the materials and not have to pay for it! To have freedom to explore and experiment.
Participant	On someone else's money!
Participant	Yeah, that's true.
Researcher	Were there specific conversations with each other, me or Roz that were helpful throughout the time you had here? What parts of your time here were helpful to you?
Participant	Looking at what other people were doing. And how they were using designs.
Researcher	Did you walk around to do that? Or did you look at the wall?
Participant	Just walking back and forth to pick up new stencils I'd see what other people were doing, but also looking at the wall and thinking,oh that's good design, I need to try that.
Participant	Helpful to see that you can do good design fairly cheap. Instead of going in with an offset printer to get these done. Just two hours to see how many posters we mass-produced. It's kind of interesting to see it didn't cost a terrible amount, just time itself. Kind of cool. That anybody could do this at their own house; you don't have to be terribly skilled or have a computer even.
Researcher	Any other things you found helpful?
Participant	Stress relief that I enjoyed for two hours today.
Researcher	What was it that gave you stress relief?
Participant	Just doing something away from the computer for two hours for the first time this year.
Participant	Not having to think really hard. Relaxed atmosphere.
Participant	No deadlines, no rules to follow in many ways. Just do whatever you have on your mind.

Researcher	Were there elements of the workshop you found confusing or difficult? Would you change anything?
Participant	It was easy. Pretty simple.
Participant	I was thinking it would be convenient to have the stencils hanging on clotheslines so you could hang them up to dry but also see what was there. The table wasn't quite big enough for everything.
Researcher	Yeah, it would be nice to see all of them. Anything else?
Participant	I really like green and everything, but I seriously think you could have drawn more attention with a little bit of red up there! A little complimentary color action. I'm serious, totally!
Participant	You could have made a limit with the red...
Researcher	Well, that would have been a rule, though.
Participant	Yeah, no rules allowed.
Researcher	That's pretty much all the questions I had. thanks for your time. you'll see the posters up in a few days.

Appendix F

April, 2007

Dear UNK student

Volunteers needed: Collaborative poster design workshop

We are requesting volunteers to participate in a collaborative design workshop that will give the participants a chance to design posters addressing mental health illnesses on the UNK campus. The workshops will be held on the UNK campus and will last a maximum of 3 hours. All students are welcome to partici-pate, and will receive an honorarium. Refreshments will be provided.

The workshops will include exploration of design principles using stencils to create a series of posters that discuss issues including; suicide, depression, substance abuse, stress, and awareness of mental health resources. Each student will work individually and collaboratively to generate the posters. The workshops will also include: 1) discussion about the above topics and how they relate to the UNK student population; 2) a questionnaire about their attitudes toward mental health issues; and 3) a questionnaire about the student's experience in the workshop. No names will be recorded on questionnaires, or in summaries of the workshop.

This project is a joint research project between UNK Counseling and Health Care and Clinton Carlson of the Department of Art and Art History. The project is part of a Masters of Design thesis in Visual Communication Design, which will result in a design project, written support document, and public exhibition.

The aim of the workshops is to provide feedback for future campus health and counseling programs, and to increase awareness of mental health illness and resources available to UNK students. Students may withdraw from the workshop at any time.

The workshop will be held (TBD).

Space is limited, and may fill up, so please write Clinton Carlson at carlsoncc@unk.edu or call 865-8351 if you are interested in participating.

Thank you,

Clinton Carlson | Lecturer, UNK Department of Art and Art History & MDES Candidate, University of Alberta

Roz Sheldon | MSW, PLMHP Suicide Prevention Project Director University of Nebraska at Kearney, Counseling and Health Care

Appendix G

April, 2007

Dear UNK student
Volunteers needed: Collaborative poster design workshop

We are seeking student groups or organizations willing to participate in a collaborative design workshop that will give the participants a chance to design posters addressing mental health illnesses on the UNK campus. The workshops will be held on the UNK campus and will last a maximum of 3 hours. All students are welcome to participate, and will receive an honorarium. Refreshments will also be provided.

The workshops will include exploration of design principles using stencils to create a series of posters that discuss issues including; suicide, depression, substance abuse, stress, and awareness of mental health resources. Each student will work individually and collaboratively to generate the posters. The workshops will also include: 1) discussion about the above topics and how they relate to the UNK student population; 2) a questionnaire about attitudes toward mental health issues; and 3) a questionnaire about each participant's experience in the workshop. No names will be recorded on questionnaires, or in summaries of the workshop.

This project is a joint research project between UNK Counseling and Health Care and Clinton Carlson of the Department of Art and Art History. The project is part of a Masters of Design thesis in Visual Communication Design, which will result in a design project, written support document, and public exhibition.

The aim of the workshops is to provide feedback for future campus health and counseling programs, to increase awareness of mental health illness and resources available to UNK students, and to explore the value of collaborative design methods for use in health communications. Participants may withdraw from the workshop at any time.

The workshop will take place between April 15 and April 30. Specific date and time will be determined in collaboration with participating groups. Space is limited, and may fill up, so please contact Clinton Carlson at carlsoncc@unk.edu or call 865-8351 if your organization is interested in participating.

Thank you,

Clinton Carlson | Lecturer, UNK Department of Art and Art History,
MDES Candidate, University of Alberta

Roz Sheldon|| MSW, PLMHP, Suicide Prevention Project Director, University of Nebraska at Kearney, Counseling and Health Care

Appendix H

Collaborative poster design workshop and focus group
_____, April _____

We are requesting volunteers to participate in a collaborative design workshop or focus group. The workshop will give participants a chance to design posters addressing mental health illnesses on the UNK campus. The focus group will evaluate a series of posters designed in the student-workshops and their method of presentation. The aim of both the workshop and focus group is to provide feedback for future campus health and counseling programs, to increase awareness of mental health illness and resources available to UNK students, and to explore the value of collaborative design methods for use in health communications.

The workshops and focus group may include discussions and questionnaires about mental health issues such as suicide, depression, substance abuse, and stress. No names will be recorded on questionnaires, or in summaries of the workshop. Participants may withdraw from the workshop or focus group at any time.

All students are welcome to participate, and will receive an honorarium. Refreshments will be provided.

Space is limited, and may fill up, so please contact Clinton Carlson at carlsoncc@unk.edu or call 865-8351 if you are interested in participating.

Thank you,

Clinton Carlson
Lecturer, UNK Department of Art and Art History
MDES Candidate, University of Alberta

Roz Sheldon
MSW, PLMHP
Suicide Prevention Project Director
University of Nebraska at Kearney, Counseling and Health Care

Appendix I

Collaborative poster design workshop
Project description and consent form

This project is part of a Masters of Design Thesis in Visual Communication Design. And is done in partnership with UNK Counseling and Health Services. The objective of this project is to explore collaborative design methods as a means to generating greater student participation and input in the design of effective health communications focused on suicide prevention and related health issues such as depression, substance abuse, and stress. In addition the project aims to understand the UNK students' beliefs about, attitudes toward, and awareness of mental health illnesses.

Your participation in the workshop is voluntary. The workshop will last no more than 3 hours and will consist of two questionnaires, a time of discussion, technical demonstrations, and studio time where participants will be asked to design and create posters using stencils. During discussions, your comments may be recorded through notes or audio recording. Your comments may be quoted in research documents, presentations, or future papers, but will be done in a way that retains your anonymity. To assure your anonymity, all workshop assistants associated with this project have signed confidentiality statements. In addition, all participants will be asked keep all conversations and interactions during the workshop confidential. However, due to the group nature of this workshop confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

This workshop may include discussion of some potentially upsetting and personal topics such as suicide, depression, substance abuse, and stress. If these or other topics make you feel uncomfortable at any time, please excuse yourself from any activity or question. You are free to leave at any time. UNK Counseling staff and resources are available during this workshop or after if you feel the need to discuss or obtain assistance in dealing with any issues brought up by this workshop. If you have recently experienced psychological distress for which you have sought therapy or counseling or if you have recently been so distressed that you have: a) lost weight; b) had trouble sleeping; c) been on continuing medication; or d) become dependent on alcohol to relieve that distress, we would like to discourage you from participating in this study.

I_____ agree to participate as a member of a collaborative poster design workshop and as a respondent to questionnaires for the above research project conducted by UNK Counseling and Health Services and Clinton Carlson, of the Department of Art and Art History.

I understand that the workshop is part of a research project and will be discussing issues of mental health illnesses including suicide, depression, substance abuse, and stress. I understand that my responses to questions during

the workshop may be recorded and included in research documents, presenta-
tions, or future papers, but will be done in a way that retains my anonymity. I
understand that I will receive a $25.00 honorarium and may withdraw at any time.

_____   _____

Participant name   Date

_____

Signature

Clinton Carlson

_____

Principal researcher signature

The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines
and approved by the Faculties of Arts, Science, Law Research Ethics Board at
the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical
conduct of research, contact Dr. Tom Johnson, Acting Chair at (780) 492-2834,

Appendix J

Collaborative poster design focus group
Project description and consent form

This project is part of a Masters of Design Thesis in Visual Communication Design. And is done in partnership with UNK Counseling and Health Services. The objective of this project is to explore collaborative design methods as a means to generating greater student participation and input in the design of effective health communications focused on suicide prevention and related health issues such as depression, substance abuse, and stress. In addition the project aims to understand the UNK students' beliefs about, attitudes toward, and awareness of mental health illnesses.

Your participation in the focus group is voluntary. The workshop will last no more than 90 minutes and will consist of a set of questions, discussion time, and a walking tour of poster's installed throughout campus. Your comments may be quoted in research documents, presentations, or future papers, but will be done in a way that retains your anonymity. To assure you're anonymity, all workshop assistants associated with this project have signed confidentiality statements. However, due to the group nature of this workshop confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

This focus group may include discussion of some potentially upsetting and personal topics such as suicide, depression, substance abuse, and stress. If these or other topics make you feel uncomfortable at any time, please excuse yourself from any activity or question. You are free to leave at any time. UNK Counseling staff and resources are available during this workshop or after if you feel the need to discuss or obtain assistance in dealing with any issues brought up by this workshop. If you have recently experienced psychological distress for which you have sought therapy or counseling or if you have recently been so distressed that you have: a) lost weight; b) had trouble sleeping; c) been on continuing medication; or d) become dependent on alcohol to relieve that distress, we would like to discourage you from participating in this study.

I_____ agree to participate in a focus group for the above research project conducted by UNK Counseling and Health Services and Clinton Carlson, of the Department of Art and Art History.

I understand that the focus group will be discussing issues of mental health illnesses including suicide, depression, substance abuse, and stress. I understand that my responses to questions during the workshop may be recorded and included in research documents, presentations, or future papers, but will be done in a way that retains my anonymity. I understand that I will receive a $25.00 honorarium and may withdraw at any time.

Participant name   Date

_____

Signature

Clinton Carlson

_____

Principal researcher signature

The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines
and approved by the Faculties of Arts, Science, Law Research Ethics Board at
the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical
conduct of research, contact Dr. Tom Johnson, Acting Chair at (780) 492-2834,

Appendix K

Collaborative poster design focus group questions

Welcome, my name is Clinton Carlson and I am a lecturer of Visual Communication Design in the Department of Art and Art History. I am also an MDES candidate at the University of Alberta and I am conducting this focus group as a part of my Master's thesis in Visual Communication Design.

This project is designed to discover the value of collaborative design methods in generating greater student participation and input in the design of effective health communications for small settings such as college campuses. In addition the project aims to explore the use of stenciling as a means of generating posters that are student-created, visually attractive, and effective at communicating health information.

I will be asking you a few questions about a series of posters that address mental health sickness on the UNK campus. Please be candid and honest in your thoughts and reactions.

1. Have you noticed the temporary walls with posters placed around campus the past 1-3 weeks?

2. If so, have you taken time to observe them and their content?

3. Have these posters made you more aware of mental health issues or resources on campus?

4. Are you aware of the resources available to UNK students, in regards to mental health and illness?

Now we are going to walk across campus and view the installed posters, and I would like to collect your opinions and reactions to the temporary wall structures, and the individual posters placed on the walls. Please be candid about your reactions, and tell us if you think this type of structure and the posters' design might raise the visibility and awareness of mental health illnesses on the UNK campus. I will be asking a few questions as we walk, but please feel free to answer any questions or offer any opinions you feel would be interesting for our research throughout the time.

1. Do you feel that posters can raise awareness or discussion among UNK students?

2. Of the messages represented on the posters which ones do you feel are most important for UNK students to hear or be aware of?

3. Do you feel that the way (stenciling) the posters were created affect their visual impact and the amount of attention you would give to them?

4. Do you feel that the way the posters were presented affected their visual impact and the amount of attention you would give to them?

5. Do you feel that the fact that the posters were created by UNK students affected attention or thought you gave to the messages?

6. Do you feel that the images portrayed in the posters are a critical element in obtaining the viewer's attention?

7. In obtaining a viewers attention, do you feel that the content of the image was important?

8. Is there a difference in how you view posters that utilize more abstract images, and posters that use images that tie into the message?

9. Do you feel that these posters have made you more aware of mental health issues and resources?

10. Do you feel that these posters would increase your willingness to seek or recommend assistance for mental health issues?

11. Do you feel that these posters would increase your willingness or odds of seeking or recommending mental health assistance through UNK Counseling and Health Services or other resources?

12. What do you feel attracts your attention more, the text or the images printed on the posters?

Appendix L

Collaborative poster design workshop
Pre-test questionnaire

Please answer or rate the following questions and statements:

1. Poster campaigns on campus are an effective way to raise awareness or discussion among UNK students.

   1= strongly disagree
   2= disagree
   3= neither agree or disagree (neutral)
   4= agree
   5= strongly agree

2. How likely are you to talk to a fellow student about mental health issues such as depression, substance abuse or suicide?

   1= not likely at all
   2= not very likely
   3= somewhat likely
   4= likely
   5= very likely

3. How likely are you to refer a friend or fellow student to UNK Counseling and Health Services?

   1= not likely at all
   2= not very likely
   3= somewhat likely
   4= likely
   5= very likely

4. How aware are you of health-related posters on campus?

   1= not aware at all
   2= not very aware
   3= somewhat aware
   4= aware
   5= very aware

5. How comfortable are you when it comes to design or art-related exercises?

1= not comfortable at all
2= not very comfortable
3= somewhat comfortable
4= comfortable
5= very comfortable

Appendix M

Collaborative poster design workshop
Pre-test questionnaire

Please answer or rate the following questions and statements:

1. Poster campaigns on campus are an effective way to raise awareness or discussion among UNK students.

   1= strongly disagree
   2= disagree
   3= neither agree or disagree (neutral)
   4= agree
   5= strongly agree

2. How likely are you to talk to a fellow student about mental health issues such as depression, substance abuse or suicide?

   1= not likely at all
   2= not very likely
   3= somewhat likely
   4= likely
   5= very likely

3. How likely are you to refer a friend or fellow student to UNK Counseling and Health Services?

   1= not likely at all
   2= not very likely
   3= somewhat likely
   4= likely
   5= very likely

4. How aware are you of health-related posters on campus?

   1= not aware at all
   2= not very aware
   3= somewhat aware
   4= aware
   5= very aware

5   How comfortable are you when it comes to design or art-related
     exercises?

     1= not comfortable at all
     2= not very comfortable
     3= somewhat comfortable
     4= comfortable
     5= very comfortable

Please answer yes or no to the following questions:

6.   Do you feel that this workshop has made you more aware of mental
     health issues and on-campus resources for assistance with those issues?

7   Do you feel that one or more of your posters are interesting composi-
     tions that might be successful in capturing the attention of viewers on
     campus?

8   Have you learned more about the mental health issues discussed in the
     workshop?

9   Have you learned more about design and communication in the
     workshop?

10. Do you feel that this type of workshop could be valuable in the design
     and production of health-related posters for UNK or other college
     campuses?

11. Would you participate in a similar workshop again?

12. Would you recommend that a friend take part in a similar workshop?

13. Do you feel that the way (stenciling) the posters were created affect their
     visual impact and the amount of attention UNK students will give to
     them?

14. Do you feel that the fact that the posters were created by UNK students
     will affect the attention or thought other UNK students will give to the
     messages?

15   Have you ever used the counseling care office on campus?

Appendix N

Collaborative poster design workshop
Questions

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this workshop. You time and input are valuable to us. This project is designed to discover the value of collaborative design methods in generating greater student participation and input in the design of effective health communications for small settings such as college campuses. In addition the project aims to explore the use of stenciling as a means of generating posters that are student-created, visually attractive, and effective at communicating health information.

I will be asking you a few questions about your experience in the workshop. Please be candid and honest in your thoughts and reactions.

1. Did you find the workshop interesting or engaging?

2. How did you go about making the decision of which posters to start with and which stencils to use?

3. Of the messages represented on the posters which ones do you feel are most important for UNK students to hear or be aware of?

4. In obtaining a viewers attention, do you feel that the content of the image is important? Why or why not?

5. Is there a difference in how you view posters that utilize more abstract images, and posters that use images that tie into the message?

6. Do you feel that participation in this workshop will increase your willingness or odds of talking about mental health issues with a friend?

7. Why did you choose to participate in this project?

8. Were there specific comments, interactions or discussions that were particularly helpful to you throughout the project?

9. Were there elements of the workshop that you found confusing or difficult?

Appendix O

Collaborative poster design interview
Questions

Thank you for taking the time for this interview. You time and input are valuable. As you may know, this project is designed to discover the value of collaborative design methods in generating greater student participation and input in the design of effective health communications for small settings such as college campuses. In addition the project aims to explore the use of stenciling as a means of generating posters that are student-created, visually attractive, and effective at communicating health information. As a health worker or administrator, your evaluation of the success and feasibility of this project is important for consideration of the potential for future application of similar methods for similar purposes.

I will be asking you a few questions about your perspective of project. Please be candid and honest in your thoughts and reactions.

1. Were you aware of the posters on campus? If so, did you feel that their design and presentation were effective and visible?

2. How easy do you feel it would be to replicate the methods in this project for future projects? And do you feel that would be valuable?

3. Have you worked with other methods of generating student involvement in and input into the design of health communications? If so, which approaches were most successful or interesting to you?

4. Do you have any suggestions about approaches or methods that might be of interest for future collaborative projects with students?

Appendix P

I_____ agree to keep all information, interactions, and participant identities that result from working with this research project confidential. I will keep all recordings, notes, or questionnaires secure while in my possession and will return each of these to the researcher at the end of the workshop.

_____   _____
Assistant's name   Date

_____
Signature

Clinton Carlson

_____
Principal researcher signature

Appendix Q

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA ETHICS APPLICATION
University of Alberta
Faculty of Arts, Science & Law Research Ethics Board
Application to Conduct Research Involving Human Participants

	Principal Investigator (student)
Name:	Clinton Carlson
Department/Faculty:	Art and Design, Faculty of Arts
Address:	Department of Art & Art History
	University of Nebraska at Kearney
	Kearney, NE 68848
Phone number:	308 865-8351
E-mail address:	clintonc@ualberta.ca

Name:	Prof. Bonnie Sadler Takach
Department/Faculty:	Art and Design, Faculty of Arts
Campus Address:	3-98A Fine Arts Building
Phone number:	780 492-5092
E-mail address:	sadler.takach@ualberta.ca

Project Title:	Collaborative design of health communications in micro-community settings
Funding Source(s):	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration/Suicide Prevention Resource Center
	University of Nebraska at Kearney, Counseling & Health Care

Please attach a more detailed proposal (i.e., 1-2 pages), including a description of the population from which research participants will be drawn (e.g., university students, nursing home residents) and a discussion of how research participants will be solicited. Also attach copies of research instruments (e.g., questionnaires, interview guides).

Materials are enclosed: Please see Appendix R for further information on research background and description of the population.

The objective of the project is to explore how collaborative design methods generate greater student participation and input in the design of effective campus health communications focused on mental health issues, including suicide, depression, substance abuse, and stress.

This project will be undertaken on the University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK) campus. If time permits, it will consist of three phases. The first phase will consist of 2-5 collaborative design workshops and will aim to discover if the workshops result in increased health-related dialogue and awareness among participants and their peers. The second phase will be a focus group aimed at discovering whether or not posters developed in the workshop are effective health communication devices that generate visibility and discussion among the student population. The third phase will include expert interviews aimed at evaluating the feasibility, potential benefits, and potential drawbacks of collaborative design workshops.

The workshops will result in a collection of student-generated posters. These posters will then be installed onto temporary walls placed in high-traffic locations throughout the campus for 1-3 weeks. In addition, posters may be installed onto existing bulletin boards of selected campus buildings and residence halls. The workshops will evaluate the value of collaborative design workshops in generating dialogue and awareness through pre- and post-test questionnaires and group discussions.

The workshops will be formed of 6-15 participants recruited from several of the following segments of the UNK campus population: Residence Hall Assistants, Art students, fraternity or sorority students, international students, students from campus organizations, or students from the general student population. The request for participation by campus organizations will come through a letter and announcements and/or posters. The request for individual participation will come through posters. Participants or their affiliated organizations will be given an honorarium of $25 per individual. Refreshments will also be provided for participants.

The workshops will be held outdoors and/or in a studio room of the Fine Arts Building. The exact location will be announced when participants confirm their intention to attend. Workshops will last approximately 3 hours. Each participant will be asked to read and sign a consent form at the beginning of each workshop.

Workshops will begin with an introduction of the topic and basic design principles. This will be followed by a short demonstration of the stenciling techniques that can be used for printing on posters. Participants will then be invited to

select their posters, stencils and begin exploring the printing process. Midway through the workshop, participants will be asked to view other participants' work and share thoughts on the design and printing processes used. At the end of the workshop participants will be asked to answer a questionnaire, and then be asked a set of questions about their experience and perspective on the issue.

If time permits, the follow up student focus group will be made up of 6-12 students who did not participate in the project workshops. These participants will be recruited through posters. Participants will be given an honorarium of $25 per individual. Refreshments may be provided for participants.

The focus group will include an introduction to the project, initial discussion, walking tour of the installed posters on campus, and summary discussion time. The focus group will start and end in a campus classroom or meeting room. The session will last no more than 2 hours. Participants will be asked to read and sign a consent form at the beginning of the session.

Expert interviews will include University health & counseling staff who are both directly involved and not directly involved with the project. In addition, University administration may be interviewed. Interviews will take place in a campus office or meeting room, and will last no longer than 45 minutes.

ASSESSMENT OF RISK TO HUMAN PARTICIPANTS:
There are some risks for participants of this project. These risks include potentially upsetting and personal topics such as suicide, depression, substance abuse, and stress. In addition, participants' confidentiality cannot be guaranteed because of the nature of group discussion and interaction during the workshops and focus groups. There is some social risk for participation in workshops or focus groups that are related to mental health issues.

These potential risks have been addressed by the methods that follow.

Careful consideration of the potentially emotional topic of this project has been given. Efforts have been taken to assure the safety and well being of all participants. All participants will be 19 years of age or older and will be directly informed of the project's topics, purpose, location, time, and mechanics prior to each workshop or focus group. All participants will be encouraged to not participate if doing so may be upsetting. No participants will be recruited through coercion, and will be randomly recruited through posters. Students currently involved in courses taught by principal investigators will not be allowed to participate.

Through the support of UNK Counseling and Health Services (UNK CHS), each workshop or focus group will include the involvement of a qualified UNK CHS staff member—assuring each participant has access to mental health resources and support. Printed and online mental health resources will also be available to all participants during and after the workshops and focus group. UNK CHS has received ethics approval through UNK's Internal Review Board process regarding the involvement of human participants in this project. A letter of support and participation in this project is included with this application (please see Appendix S).

Questions have been tailored to avoid direct, personal questions regarding mental health. Students will also be informed that they can opt not to answer any questions they feel may be upsetting, and may leave or seek assistance at any time.

Participants will be informed that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed due to the nature of the projects. However, they will be encouraged to keep the activities, thoughts, names, and comments confidential. All research assistants will be required to sign confidentiality agreements prior to the workshops or focus group. Data from workshops, focus groups and interviews may be collected through questionnaires, notes and audio recordings, but no participant's names will be identified in connection with any of the collected data. Participants' statements may be used with their permission in the support document and public exhibition, but will not be connected with any participants' names or identities. Quotes, views and names of expert interviewers may be included in the support documents, but only after reviewed and approved by the quoted individual.

All the textual materials to be used for the project are enclosed.

I have read the UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA STANDARDS FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS [GFC Policy Manual, Section 66] and agree to abide by these standards in conducting my research.

_____   _____
Signature of Principal Investigator(s)   Date

_____   _____
Signature of Faculty Supervisor/sponsor   Date

Appendix R

Detailed Research Background and Population Description

TOPIC
This project is designed to explore how collaborative design methods might improve health communications in small-scale (micro-community) settings.

RESEARCH PROBLEM
Micro-community settings present unique challenges to the design of health communications. These challenges include: cultural perspectives and information networks that are specific to a population or community; skepticism of messages that originate from "outside" the community; and a lack of resources for implementing full-scale mass marketing strategies.

Many health communication researchers are calling for methods that activate community-members in the process of communicating health issues (Ford et al., 2003; James et al., 2004; Majumdar et al., 2004; Martin, 2003; McKee et al., 2004). According to Ford, Odallo, and Chorlton, health communication programs may benefit from taking into account the rights and empowerment of community members. Messages should be less "prescriptive" and based on community decisions made through collaborative dialogue (2003).

Through collaborative methods, designers, health agencies, and community workers may be able to work together to reduce the use of some existing health communication methods that have resulted in: 1) culturally misguided messages and communication vehicles; 2) interventions that have little community support or advocacy; and 3) reliance on large amounts of outside resources—which are not reproducible.

By actively engaging community members in the design process, the field of visual communication design may be of help in discovering collaborative methods that result in effective health communications. This project's aim is to explore the use of collaborative design workshops in the creation of health communication messages for University students.

BACKGROUND RESEARCH
In their book, Strategic communication in the HIV/AIDS epidemic, McKee et al., detail a health communication model that aims to foster collaboration. Their model calls for collaboration that empowers marginalized community members, and builds on existing relationships of trust, mobilizes existing community organizations and increases interpersonal dialogue within the community (2004). Collaborative methods that are able to foster these interactions have had success throughout the world (McKee et al., 2004; Bowden, 2004; Myhre & Flora, 2000; Kelly, 2004; D James, 2002) with a variety of health-related issues.

How can collaborative design workshops for micro-community settings result in increased health-related dialogue and increased awareness among workshop participants and their peers?

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS OF INTEREST ARE:

Do collaborative design workshop participants feel a sense of reward and ownership toward the posters and knowledge that results from the workshop?

Can collaborative design workshops result in visible, appealing posters even if participants do not consider themselves artistically inclined?

Can collaborative design workshops result in reduced stigmatization of mental health issues among workshop participants?

How does the use of stenciling to create posters affect the visibility and interpretation of health-related posters among community members?

Can collaborative design workshops give health workers and organizations valuable insight and greater empathy toward community members?

Can the combination of low-tech printing techniques and greater reliance on community involvement result in methods that are feasible and effective?

RESEARCH PURPOSE, APPLICATION, SETTING, AND PARTICIPANTS

Purpose

The emphasis of this project will be to discover if collaborative design workshops might increase health-related dialogue and awareness among workshop participants and their peers. However, the project also aims to explore the use of collaborative design workshops to generate culturally specific health messages in an easily replicable manner.

Application

Health or community workers in schools, rural communities, social organizations, or among specific sub-populations (eg. intravenous drug users) may benefit from methods that increase community ownership, awareness, activity, and result in culturally specific health communications. In addition community development organizations may benefit from replicable methods of designing health communications.

Setting
This project will explore the use of collaborative design workshops to aid in the communication of mental health issues (suicide, substance abuse, depression, and stress) on the University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK) campus. The campus is home to about 6,500 students, including over 400 international students.

Participants
Participants for this project will include University students aged 19 or over. Students will be recruited through posters throughout the UNK campus.

RESEARCH DESIGN
This project will consist of 2-3 phases. The first will include the collaborative design workshops and will aim to answer the primary research question. The second phase will include a focus group and will attempt to answer whether or not the posters that resulted from the workshop are effective, culturally-specific health communication devices that generate visibility and discussion among the student population. The third phase will include expert interview(s) and will aim to evaluate the feasibility, identify the potential benefits, and reveal potential drawbacks to future collaborative design workshops.

Collaborative design workshops
The collaborative design workshops will include participants from: 1) the general student population; 2) student organizations; and 3) department-specific student population. The participants will be recruited through posters. The workshops will last approximately three hours and will include an initial pre-test question-naire, introduction, demonstration, individual exploration, group reflection, post-test questionnaire, and post-test discussion. The pre-test questionnaire will be compared with post-test results to evaluate if participants feel more or less likely to discuss, ask about, or help a friend get assistance with mental health issues. The post-test discussion will evaluate how participants feel about the posters that resulted from the workshop and how they feel about the workshop itself. In particular, the participants' sense of ownership, evaluation of finished posters, and reflection on the workshop will be requested.

Student focus group
The student focus group will include participants from the general student population who did not take part in the original collaborative design workshops. The focus group will include a project and topic introduction, initial discus-sion, walking tour, and summary discussion. The initial discussion will focus on revealing whether or not participants had noticed or interacted with the posters (resulting from the workshops) that were installed throughout campus prior to the focus group. The walking tour will evaluate the students' response and evalu-ation of the finished posters and the method with which they are displayed. The summary discussion will aim to reveal the overall impact the posters may have on the participants and their willingness to engage their peers, or seek help with mental health issues.

Expert interviews
The expert interviews will include University health & counseling staff who are both involved and not involved directly with this project. In addition, University administration may be interviewed. The interviews will aim to evaluate how

feasible, effective, and valuable the workshops may be to healthcare staff and organizations. The interviews will also aim to reveal and discuss any drawbacks or hesitations by participants to using collaborative design workshops for future health-related communication campaigns.

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Nebraska
UNIVERSITY OF
Kearney

DIVISION OF STUDENT LIFE
Counseling & Health Care

February 26, 2007

Clinton Carlson
University of Nebraska at Kearney
908 W. 25th St.
Kearney, NE 68849

Dear Clinton,

I am pleased to express my support and interest for your recent proposal that includes utilizing community activated design on the UNK campus. I am the Project Director for the Campus Suicide Prevention Grant awarded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), and I have also been researching positive activities for students on campus that involves social marketing. It is encouraging to learn that you have been able to develop an activity to educate and involve students while designing effective media on an important social cause.

This project will be an interest to my self and others in the Counseling and Health Care Department because of the comprehensive approach it takes. The outcomes of this project will be of importance as we deliver services to students on our campus. Students may be interested in these new activities to become involved while learning more about suicide prevention, depression, and the stigma related to mental illness. It has been found that activities involving positive variables and outcomes are needed on campus and this would be an excellent way for us to get additional information regarding this very need. We have gone through the IRB approval process and understand the importance of following specific ethical standards in regards to participants. We agree to be personally involved in each workshop or activity associated with this project to insure all students have access to mental health resources and support.

It is encouraging to know that this idea and proposal is being made so many can benefit. I am confident in the support I offer this project and agree to fully participate in the proposal on behalf of the Suicide Prevention Grant Program.

Sincerely,

Roz Sheldon, MSW, PLMHP
Suicide Prevention Project Director
University of Nebraska at Kearney, Counseling and Health Care

Appendix T

THESIS EXHIBIT

Fine Arts Building | University of Alberta | April 2008
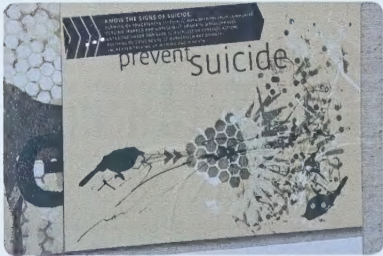

Exhibit detail

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